Memo To Members & Partners
A weekly newsletter from the National Low Income Housing Coalition

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Budget and Appropriations

House to Consider Continuing Resolution This Week Extending Funding for Federal Programs Until After November Elections

By Kim Johnson, NLIHC Senior Policy Director

Keywords: Budget and Appropriations, THUD, HUD, FY27

The House is expected to consider a continuing resolution (CR) this week that would extend funding for federal programs and services until December 4. While funding for the current federal fiscal year does not run out until October 1, Congress will not be able to negotiate, draft, and finalize all 12 spending bills before the new fiscal year begins, and lawmakers are eager to avoid a shutdown in the run up to the midterm elections in November.

A CR temporarily extends funding for federal programs at previously approved levels and is used to give lawmakers more time to negotiate and pass final spending bills for the upcoming fiscal year. While Democrats in the House seem open to moving a CR, Appropriations Committee Ranking Member Rosa DeLauro (D-CT) noted she and other Democrats are waiting for the White House to share a list of "anomalies," programs that would require a short-term funding boost in the event of a CR in order to maintain operations, before considering a CR. Senate Majority Leader John Thune (R-SD) also confirmed his chamber is drafting a CR.

Final FY27 Spending Bills Expected After November Elections

With limited floor time before November, a long list of priorities, and ongoing disagreements in the Senate Appropriations Committee over fiscal year (FY) 27 spending, Congress is not expected to finalize their FY27 spending bills until after the midterm elections, at the earliest.

The Senate Appropriations Committee last week postponed their planned review of several FY27 spending bills following the death of Senator Lindsey Graham (R-SC) and the continued absence of Senator Mitch McConnell (R-KY), both of whom serve on the committee. Senate Appropriations Committee Chair Susan Collins (R-ME) and Vice Chair Patty Murray (D-WA) have been locked in a stalemate over topline spending levels for federal programs, with Chair Collins seeking a drastic increase in defense spending, and Vice Chair Murray pushing for a more equitable spending increase between defense and non-defense programs. It is not clear when the committee might release their Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development (THUD) bill, responsible for funding HUD's vital affordable housing, homelessness, and community development programs.

Meanwhile, the House has continued their work on the FY27 appropriations process, with three bills passing out of the chamber last week, although a floor vote on the House's FY27 THUD spending bill has not yet been scheduled. The House's THUD bill for FY27 would cut funding for HUD's programs by over 8 percent from the previous fiscal year, which would have a dramatic impact on the communities, families, and individuals who rely on HUD funding to help with affordable housing construction and preservation, rental assistance, homelessness services, and to meet other important needs.

Senate May Consider Proposal for Automatic CR

The Senate may also soon consider a bill from Senators James Lankford (R-OK) and Maggie Hassan (D-NH) that would create an automatic CR to extend funding at the prior year's level when Congress is unable to finalize their appropriations bills for the upcoming fiscal year. While the purported objective of this bill is to avoid government shutdowns, which carry significant costs to communities, families, and individuals, automatic CRs would significantly reduce pressure on Congress to reach an agreement on full-year spending bills and would cede more control over the annual appropriations process to the executive branch.

An automatic CR increases the potential for a year-long CR, which would lock in the previous year's funding for the new fiscal year. Annual funding increases are vital to ensuring HUD rental and homelessness assistance programs continue serving the millions of families, people with disabilities, veterans, older adults, low-wage workers, and others who rely on HUD programs to help keep a roof over their heads. Because the cost of rent increases every year, programs must receive increased funding every year to maintain assistance for current households; even flat funding acts as a cut, reducing the number of people served. At current funding levels, only one in four households who qualifies for any form of rental assistance receives it, leaving the majority of otherwise qualified households to struggle to afford the cost of housing.

Tell Congress to Expand – Not Cut – Federal Investments in Affordable Housing and Homelessness Assistance Programs!

At a time when a record number of renters are housing cost-burdened and families around the country are struggling to afford necessities like housing, food, and medical care, Congress should be working to expand—not cut—funding for programs that help people make ends meet.

Advocates can use NLIHC's toolkits and resources to take action on the FY27 spending bill and urge federal lawmakers to increase investments in HUD programs, including NLIHC's top priorities:

- Providing at least $45.6 billion for Tenant-Based Rental Assistance (TBRA) programs, which would be enough to ensure all current TBRA contracts are renewed, and that the more than 40,000 households still served by an Emergency Housing Voucher (EHV) continue to receive rental assistance.
- Investing at least $5.1 billion in HUD's Homeless Assistance Grants (HAG) program and including language in the final FY27 spending bill protecting funding for Continuum of

Care (CoC) programs so they are not destabilized by potential changes from the administration.

- Fully funding the Public Housing Operating Fund at the full, formula-determined need, plus $598 million to address the cumulative shortfall in Public Housing operations reported in FY25, and providing increased funding for the Public Housing Capital Fund to begin addressing the capital needs backlog in Public Housing.
- Investing in accessible, affordable homes for older adults and people with disabilities by fully renewing all existing Project-Based Rental Assistance (PBRA) contracts and Project Rental Assistance Contracts (PRACs) and expanding funding for the Section 202 Housing for the Elderly and Section 811 Housing for Persons with Disabilities programs.
- Providing at least $15 million for HUD's Eviction Protection Grant Program (EPGP), which provides communities with grants to establish right to counsel and other programs that help people avoid eviction and remain housed.
- At least maintaining funding of $1.1 billion for the Indian Housing Block Grant (IHBG) program and increasing funding for the IHBG-Competitive program to $150 million, targeted to Tribal communities with the most urgent housing needs.
- Establishing guardrails to ensure the administration releases appropriated funding to communities and does not withhold, redirect, limit, or otherwise rescind congressionally approved funding.

Advocates can take action today by:

- Emailing or calling members' offices to tell them about the importance of affordable housing, homelessness, and community development resources to you, your family, your community, or your work. You can use NLIHC's Take Action page to look up your member offices or call/send an email directly!
- Sharing stories of those directly impacted by homelessness and housing instability. Storytelling adds emotional weight to your message and can help lawmakers see how their policy decisions impact actual people. Learn about how to tell compelling stories with this resource.
- Organizations can also join CHCDF's sign on letter calling for the highest possible funding for HUD and USDA affordable housing, homelessness, and community development programs in any final FY27 spending bills. Read the letter and sign your organization on here.

Visit NLIHC's Advocacy Hub for more information and resources that can help you take action and help protect the affordable housing programs people rely on.

House Budget Committee Republicans Pass Resolution for Third Reconciliation Package

By Kim Johnson, NLIHC Senior Policy Director

Keywords: Budget and Appropriations, THUD, HUD, FY27

On July 16, the House Budget Committee Republicans advanced a budget resolution for a third reconciliation package. In addition to considering fiscal year (FY) 27 spending bills, republicans on the House Budget Committee passed the framework for what would be the third reconciliation bill enacted by the Republican-controlled Congress in the last two years. The outline, known as a "budget resolution," would provide roughly $95 billion in additional spending, including $60 billion for defense, $13 billion for intelligence operations, $12 billion in farm relief, and $10 billion to assist with the administration of the "Safeguard American Vote Eligibility (SAVE) Act," a voter suppression bill pushed by the White House.

The resolution must be adopted by both the House and Senate before committees can put together legislative text for the full reconciliation package. While House Speaker Mike Johnson (R-LA) hopes to bring the resolution to the House floor for a vote as soon as next week, it is not clear whether it has sufficient support to pass—with every Democrat in the House voting against the bill and a very narrow majority, Speaker Johnson will need nearly every member of his party to vote in-favor of the resolution to continue moving it forward. Several fiscal conservatives have expressed concerns over the resolution's high price tag, which does not include cuts to other programs to help offset the proposed spending increase.

"Ultimately, we decided this legislation, for a whole host of procedural reasons, was not the place in order to codify some of the things that we're doing in the anti-fraud task force," said Vice President J.D. Vance in an interview. Republicans already enacted massive spending cuts to critical human needs programs, including Medicaid and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), through their first reconciliation package, H.R.1; any additional cuts to these or other anti-poverty programs would push more people off of assistance and further into financial hardship.

The resolution also faces an uncertain future in the Senate, where lawmakers—including all Senate Democrats and Republican Senators Thom Tills (R-NC), Lisa Murkowski (R-AK), Susan Collins (R-ME), and Mitch McConnell—have repeatedly voted against the "SAVE Act." Senator Tillis emphasized during a speech on the Senate floor that he would oppose any bill trying to move provisions from the "SAVE Act," stating "[if] I see a reconciliation bill come from the House with another failed attempt to confuse this election, I will use every device I have available to slow down the wheels of government until people cop a clue and do the math."

NLIHC and our nonpartisan *Our Homes, Our Votes* campaign strongly oppose the "SAVE Act," and joined a sign-on letter in February 2026 with more than 130 national, state, and local organizations led by the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights strongly opposing the bill.

HUD

HUD Publishes *Federal Register* Notice Announcing Withdrawal of Additional Agency Guidance Documents

By Renee Williams, NLIHC Senior Advisor for Public Policy

Keywords: HUD, fair housing, guidance, Office of General Counsel

On July 17, HUD's Office of General Counsel (OGC) published a *Federal Register* notice (Notice) announcing the withdrawal of 13 documents, primarily HUD guidance documents focused on "Fair Housing Act" (FHA) interpretation and enforcement. This is the second time in recent history that HUD has announced a withdrawal of multiple fair housing guidance documents. The agency, which is currently undertaking a "comprehensive review of its sub-regulatory guidance," previously published a Federal Register notice announcing the withdrawal of eight Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity (FHEO) guidance documents (see *Memo*, 4/13).

The withdrawn documents listed in the July Notice discuss a range of important issues and have often provided helpful insights for practitioners. The topics of these documents include limited English proficiency, land use practices, LGBTQ+ protections, the "Violence Against Women Act," use of criminal records in housing decisions, special purpose credit programs, and source of income discrimination, among others. According to the Notice, the withdrawals were effective September 25, 2025.

The oldest withdrawn document referenced in the Notice is a 1990 Memorandum of Understanding between HUD and DOJ.

Listed below are the 13 withdrawn documents from the July Notice, with their issuance dates:

- *Memorandum of Understanding Between DOJ and HUD Concerning Enforcement of the Fair Housing Act* (December 7, 1990)
- *Referrals of Pattern or Practice Fair Housing Cases to the DOJ* (December 12, 2011)
- *OGC Guidance Application of Fair Housing Act Standards to Use of Criminal Records* (April 4, 2016)
- *OGC Guidance FH Act Protections for LEP Persons* (September 15, 2016)
- *Joint Statement, HUD DOJ, State, and Local Land Use Law and Practices and the FH Act* (November 10, 2016)
- *Elements of Proof* (August 11, 2014)
- *Application to the Fair Housing Act of the Supreme Court's Decision in Bostock v. Clayton County* (February 9, 2021)
- *Office of General Counsel Guidance on the Fair Housing Act's Treatment of Certain Special Purpose Credit Programs That are Designed to be Implemented in Compliance with the Equal Credit Opportunity Act and Regulation B* (December 6, 2021)
- *Appraisal Elements of Proof* (May 6, 2022)
- *Limiting PHA and Owner Discretion in Admitting and Evicting Tenants in Federally Assisted Housing* (March 27, 2023)
- *Final Legal Determination for Implementation of the Violence Against Women Act (Asked and Answered)* (October 11, 2023)
- *Whether the Mrs. Murphy Exemption applies to dwellings solely owned by LLCs or other business entities* (July 10, 2024)

- *Application of Fair Housing and Civil Rights Laws to Source of Income Restrictions* (November 4, 2024)

NLIHC Submits Comments Opposing Proposed OMB Federal Grantmaking Rule; About 500,000 Comments Submitted

By Sarita Kelkar, NLIHC Policy Intern and Renee Williams, NLIHC Senior Advisor for Public Policy

Keywords: OMB, HUD, federal funding, grants, recipients, DEI, gender, fair housing, affordable housing, voter engagement, disparate impact, comment period

On May 29, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) published its proposal to reshape the framework for federal funding awards. The Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM), entitled "Regulation for Federal Financial Assistance," would update regulations across federal agencies, including HUD. The scope and nature of the changes have prompted significant concern, with nearly 500,000 comments submitted. An analysis of 52,322 posted comments found that about 95% of comments in the sample opposed the rulemaking.

NLIHC submitted a comment letter on July 13 describing how "the Proposed Rule's injection of political ideology, regulatory uncertainty, and confusion into federal financial assistance—including funds for crucial federal housing programs—threatens to make [the affordable housing crisis] worse," urging for the rule to be withdrawn immediately.

Background on OMB's Proposed Rule

The Proposed Rule would codify the OMB "Uniform Guidance" governing federal funding awards, with substantial revisions, as regulations (as opposed to guidance). This approach centralizes rules governing federal financial assistance at OMB—specifying at proposed 2 C.F.R. 1.205 that the rulemaking focuses on grants and cooperative agreements, though portions of the OMB regulations would apply to federal financial assistance broadly.

OMB's changes, if finalized, would apply across the grantmaking cycle, including application, as well as suspension and termination, with an overarching emphasis on ensuring funding recipients do not run afoul of the administration's policy positions (see *Memo*, 6/29). For example, the Proposed Rule would, among other changes, require federal agencies to ensure funds are not used to support disparate impact; diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility (DEI/DEIA); or "gender ideology."

NLIHC strongly opposes the Proposed Rule, and is particularly concerned about how, if finalized, the proposed changes would impact federal housing programs, including by creating confusion and uncertainty for federal funding recipients during an affordable housing crisis.

NLIHC Comment Letter to OMB

NLIHC's comments contextualize the Proposed Rule's anticipated effects against the backdrop of the affordable housing crisis. The letter also raises concerns regarding fair housing, the insufficient comment period, and impacts on nonpartisan voter registration activities.

Calling for its immediate withdrawal, the letter emphasizes how:

- **The Proposed Rule would insert doubt into federal housing programs key to building and preserving affordable housing.**
    - When grantees' access to federal funds depends on following vague conditions (e.g., being prohibited from "encouraging" or "facilitating" DEI/DEIA policies and "gender ideology") that directly conflict with state and local nondiscrimination laws, grantees are in a "double bind" of either possibly losing federal dollars or running afoul of state and local nondiscrimination protections. The letter notes how the nature of the Proposed Rule makes understanding the implications for each federal housing program difficult.
    - Under this rulemaking, the predictability of federal funding—a characteristic grantees rely on for their programs—is lost when grants can be arbitrarily terminated for failing to comply with "the national interest."
- **Fair housing would be directly undermined by this rulemaking.** Under the "Fair Housing Act" (FHA), all federal agencies have an obligation to affirmatively further fair housing (AFFH). The Proposed Rule would actively impede this by, among other things:
    - Prohibiting use of disparate impact liability and erroneously claiming that disparate impact liability, which has been recognized by the U.S. Supreme Court as a tool to uncover discriminatory intent, mandates discrimination.
    - Threatening future funding for grantees who have historically used disparate impact liability in the past.
- **The Proposed Rule allots a comment period of 45 days that runs counter to HUD requirements.** Since the rulemaking seeks to amend HUD regulations, where a 60-day comment period is required, the NPRM fails to provide sufficient time for public input.
    - NLIHC's comments also noted that Senator Susan Collins (R-ME) previously made a request to OMB to provide additional time for public comment (see *Memo*, 7/13), in her own letter expressing concerns about the impacts of the Proposed Rule on scientific research as well as on small and rural communities.
- **Federal funds would be prohibited from going toward nonpartisan voter registration activities.** While nonfederal funds could still be used for this purpose, the Proposed Rule raises concerns about chilling participation in lawful voter registration activities and confusing grantees whose programs have voter registration obligations.

Read NLIHC's comment letter here.

Read the Proposed Rule.

Read the National Council of Nonprofits explainer resource.

Read NLIHC's resource regarding possible impacts on housing programs.

Read additional analysis of the rule here.

Public Charge

Final Public Charge Rule Released, PIF Issues Statement

By Kayla Blackwell, NLIHC Senior Housing Policy Analyst

Keywords: immigrant, Protecting Immigrant Families, PIF, Department of Homeland Security, DHS, proposed rule

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has announced a final rule rescinding the 2022 public charge ground of inadmissibility ("public charge rule"). The final rule is scheduled to be published in the *Federal Register* today, Monday, July 20, and is slated to become effective 60 days after publication.

The Protecting Immigrant Families Coalition (PIF) released a press statement in response, stating, "An initial reading of the final regulation suggests that, despite legal requirements to consider public comments, the Trump administration largely disregarded the thousands of comments opposing the proposal issued last fall."

NLIHC submitted comments opposing the proposed version of the public charge rule in December 2025 (see *Memo*, 1/12); over 8,800 comments were received in response to the proposed rule.

NLIHC is reviewing the final rule and will release additional analysis soon.

Background

DHS has used the "public charge" test to determine admission into the United States or approval for a green card for over a century. An individual is deemed a "public charge" if they are identified as likely to depend on government benefits as their main source of support—and subsequently denied entry or green card status if so.

Under the 2022 public charge rule, usage of several health and social services was NOT considered in a public charge determination: Medicaid, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and housing assistance programs such as public housing, Housing Choice Vouchers, and Project-Based Rental Assistance (PBRA).

NLIHC's comment letter opposing the proposed rule stated: "Without certainty regarding whether housing assistance programs are considered in the public charge assessment, families will forgo critical and lifesaving housing assistance. In turn, this unnecessary uncertainty will increase homelessness, risk severe health consequences including death, and worsen the housing affordability crisis for local and state governments." NLIHC urged DHS to withdraw the Proposed Rule in its entirety.

Read the DHS unpublished rule here.

Our Homes, Our Votes

"What's Next for Housing Advocates After *Louisiana v. Callais*" Webinar Recap

By Tia Turner, NLIHC Project Manager, *Our Homes, Our Votes*

Keywords: recap, Louisiana v. Callais, 21st Century Road to Housing Act, NAACP LDF, SPLC, Black Voters Matter

NLIHC's *Our Homes, Our Votes* nonpartisan campaign hosted its July 13 webinar, "What's Next for Housing Advocates After *Louisiana v. Callais*," concluding the campaign's three-part webinar series focused on the implications of the U.S. Supreme Court's decision and the path forward for housing and civic engagement advocates.

Building on conversations from previous webinars, the discussion shifted from understanding the legal implications of *Louisiana v. Callais* to identifying concrete opportunities for action. Panelists explored how advocates can strengthen democracy by advancing state-level voting protections, organizing year-round, and building lasting civic power that extends beyond election cycles.

NLIHC Vice President of Strategic Partnerships & Campaigns Chantelle Wilkinson welcomed participants and reflected on the importance of sustaining momentum following the Court's decision. She celebrated recent bipartisan housing policy victories, including the enactment of the "21st Century Road to Housing Act," while emphasizing that protecting democracy and expanding access to the ballot remain essential to advancing housing justice. Wilkinson encouraged attendees to continue preparing for the 2026 election cycle by investing in community engagement, voter education, and nonpartisan organizing.

Christina Das, Attorney at the NAACP Legal Defense Fund (LDF), opened the discussion by highlighting the growing momentum behind "State Voting Rights Acts" (SVRAs). She explained that while federal voting rights protections have narrowed in recent years, states have an opportunity to establish stronger safeguards that protect voters from discrimination and expand equitable access to the ballot. Das discussed how state voting rights legislation can provide additional legal protections beyond federal law, strengthen language access, improve election administration, and create new avenues for communities to challenge discriminatory voting practices. She encouraged advocates to view state-level policymaking as an important strategy for advancing voting rights in the wake of *Louisiana v. Callais*.

Waikinya Clanton, Mississippi State Director for the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC), built on those themes by discussing what successful civic engagement looks like on the ground. Drawing from organizing efforts across Mississippi, Clanton emphasized that meaningful democracy work requires long-term investment in relationships, trusted local leadership, and sustained community education. She encouraged organizations to move beyond transactional election-year outreach by creating year-round opportunities for residents to learn about their rights, participate in local decision-making, and build leadership within their own communities. Coalition-building, community trust, and consistent engagement, she noted, remain essential to strengthening civic participation.

The conversation concluded with Fenika Miller, National Field Co-Director for Black Voters Matter, who discussed strategies for sustaining civic engagement well beyond the 2026 midterm elections. Miller emphasized that building civic power is a continuous process rooted in community organizing, leadership development, and authentic relationships rather than short-term electoral campaigns. She encouraged organizations to meet communities where they are, support local leaders already doing the work, and invest in year-round organizing that connects voting to the everyday issues affecting people's lives, including housing, economic opportunity, education, and community well-being.

Throughout the webinar, speakers reinforced that protecting voting rights requires action at every level, from state legislatures and local governments to neighborhood-based organizing efforts. Panelists emphasized that housing organizations have an important role to play in educating residents, strengthening community leadership, supporting trusted messengers, and ensuring that historically underrepresented communities continue to have equitable access to participate in democracy.

The webinar concluded with audience questions focused on state advocacy opportunities, coalition-building strategies, and practical ways housing organizations can integrate nonpartisan civic engagement into their ongoing work. Participants were encouraged to continue leveraging partnerships, educating communities about their voting rights, and utilizing OHOV resources to strengthen civic participation ahead of the 2026 election cycle.

Find presentation slides here.

Stay connected with OHOV

Subscribe to the *Our Homes, Our Votes* Monthly Newsletter to receive the latest updates on voting rights, civic engagement resources, upcoming webinars, and opportunities to take action at the intersection of housing justice and democracy.

Follow us on Instagram here.

The recording of the webinar can be found on NLIHC's YouTube channel here. The recordings for the 2026 webinar series are available here.

Additional resources shared during the webinar:

- OHOV Resource Hub
- OHOV Webinar Series
- Check Your Voter Registration

- State Voting Rights Act resources from the NAACP Legal Defense Fund

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Opportunity Starts at Home

"Recovery, Mental Health, and Housing" Webinar Recap

By Haadia Hyder, NLIHC Strategic Partnerships & Campaigns Intern and Julie Walker, NLIHC Project Manager, *Opportunity Starts at Home*

Keywords: multi-sector, affordable housing, recovery, webinar recap

The *Opportunity Starts at Home* campaign (OSAH) and OSAH Roundtable Member Legal Action Center hosted a webinar on July 14 outlining the connection between access to affordable housing and recovery for individuals with substance use disorders and/or mental health conditions.

Speakers included:

- Julie Walker, OSAH project manager, NLIHC
- Victoria Palacio Carr, deputy director of state strategy, Legal Action Center (LAC)
- Anita Burgos, PhD, director of public policy, National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)
- Marcella Maguire, PhD, director of health systems integration, Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH)
- Jesse Rabinowitz, campaign and communications director, National Homelessness Law Center (NHLC)
- Ariel Johnson, director of operations, Martinsville, and patient navigation, Virginia Harm Reduction Coalition (VHRC)

Julie Walker, OSAH project manager, opened the webinar by sharing the state of America's affordable housing crisis, its impact on people with substance use disorders or mental health conditions, and the importance of cross-sector collaboration in coordinating a response to harmful policy and rhetoric targeting this population, particularly those experiencing homelessness.

The panel discussion, moderated by Victoria Palacio Carr, began by establishing connections between recovery, mental health, and housing. Dr. Anita Burgos cited the official position of NAMI to support the pursuit of laws and policies that ensure "stable, safe, affordable, and supportive housing options for people with mental health conditions."

Ariel Johnson referenced Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, where housing is included as a basic need. She also emphasized that housing is critical to the health of people recovering from mental health conditions and substance use disorders.

Dr. Marcella Maguire emphasized that quality mental healthcare is not effective when clients do not have a place to sleep. Jesse Rabinowitz echoed sentiments of fellow panelists, stating that "housing is the best form of healthcare".

Rabinowitz expanded on the connections between mental health care, substance use recovery, and homelessness, focusing on the criminalization of homelessness across the country and the necessity of power building in response to these attacks. By coordinating advocacy across sectors, Rabinowitz argued that we can move our politicians to prioritize meeting people's basic needs.

The panelists also discussed the impact of upcoming Medicare cuts that, along with increased restrictions and administrative burdens, are estimated to cut millions of people off healthcare coverage in the coming years. At the same time, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) is attempting to reshape the framework for federal funding awards, potentially impacting the funding of nonprofits and direct-service providers across the country. Speaking to this environment, Ariel Johnson highlighted the need to change how we see those in recovery and suggested a shift from seeing substance use as a crime to seeing it as a healthcare issue. She also argued that policies must establish dignity and focus on human-centered systems of care, emphasizing autonomy as a core aspect of harm reduction. Dr. Maguire focused on the need to integrate systems of care, bringing resources for housing, healthcare, and recovery together for effective wraparound services.

The panelists concluded by emphasizing that integrated systems, cross-sector power building, and person-first recovery are critical to better outcomes for people with substance use disorders and/or mental health conditions.

NAMI is an OSAH campaign Steering Committee member. LAC, CSH, and NHLC are members of the OSAH campaign's Roundtable.

Find the recorded webinar here.

To learn more about the connections between Recovery, Mental Health, and Housing, read the OSAH fact sheet here.

Strategic Partnerships

NLIHC's Summer of IDEAS Hosts its First Virtual Screening

By Haadia Hyder, NLIHC Strategic Partnerships & Campaigns Intern

Keywords: documentary, Bronwyn Carver, Davey Schaupp, Michael Larson, Coralette M. Hannon, Baltimore

NLIHC kicked off the Summer of IDEAS, a monthly summer film series, with an event on July 8, 2026. The event featured the documentary "No Place to Grow Old," which focuses on a group that is regularly underrepresented in discussions around homelessness—older adults—and a post-screening discussion with those who made the film come to life.

The documentary gave us the full picture of what happens and doesn't happen when we stop investing in people. Shortly after, we moved into a panel discussion where audience members tuned in from across the United States, coming from Anchorage, AK; Somerville, MA; Washington, DC; San Diego, CA, and everywhere in between. The conversation was lively, honest, and established a clear sense of urgency when addressing homelessness in our aging populations.

Panelists included Bronwyn Carver, a poet and individual with lived experience and one of the people featured in the film; Davey Schaupp, the film's director; Michael Larson, producer of the film and executive director/founder of Humans for Housing; and Coralette M. Hannon, director of livable communities at AARP Government Affairs. Together, the group engaged with poignant, value-laden questions, conversed about the state of housing today, and pushed the audience to examine the role they play in their own communities.

When it comes to older adults experiencing homelessness, both Carver and Schaupp emphasized the harmful idea that older adults who are unhoused "should have had it figured out by now" (regarding housing stability), which elicits feelings of shame in at-risk individuals, preventing them from accessing care. As Schupp puts it, "Homelessness sits under the surface of everyone in America," referencing how close most of us are to being unhoused ourselves and the idea that homelessness is not an individual failure, but a systemic one. When it comes to barriers that keep individuals from staying housed, Carver cites extra fees associated with being a renter, financial burdens that come with supporting others, and the simple fact that the price of everything goes up, "and (your) money doesn't"—which are all systemic issues in renting, elder/childcare, inflation, and wage stagnation.

The discussion routinely came back to the idea of systemic change. When discussing what the best structural solutions could be to prevent homelessness, the answer was simple across the board: "we need to keep people housed." Schaupp brought up a quote by South African Bishop Desmond Tutu:

> *There comes a point where we need to stop just pulling people out of the river. We need to go upstream and find out why they're falling in.*

In the discussion of solutions, panelists also highlight the fact that small financial assistance and coordinated services can go a long way to prevent evictions, and by extension, keep people housed.

Lawson shines a light on the relationship between policy and storytelling. Centering lived experiences allows us to ask the hard questions: what are we getting wrong and what does it take to get it right?

For Hannon, the focus is on investing in implementations that work, highlighting the idea that "the system works when we invest in it," referencing how many of the subjects of the documentary were able to find forms of permanent housing only when intentional investment was present.

When asked what the goal of a film like "No Place to Grow Old" was, the answer was unanimous: to create a world "where it becomes unconscionable to see people experiencing homelessness." Film can change hearts, hearts change people, and people change policies.
Our next Summer of IDEAS screening will be held in person, on August 13 in Baltimore, MD, featuring a screening of "UnBlocked Englewood"—a powerful examination of housing discrimination, neighborhood disinvestment, and the lasting impacts of systemic racism through the story of Chicago's Englewood community.

You can register to join us in Baltimore here.

You can learn more about the Summer of IDEAS and all the work the *Strategic Partnerships* team is doing here.

Research

Clients Share Positive Experiences with Cleveland's Right to Counsel Program

By Tori Bourret, NLIHC Manager, State & Local Research Outreach

Keywords: right to counsel, tenant protections

A study published in *Housing Studies*, "'If I wouldn't have had them, I would've been lost': Tenant Right to Counsel in Cleveland," explored elements of Cleveland's Eviction Right to Counsel program (RTC-CL) to understand how the process and local context could impact program outcomes. The authors found that staffing, outreach strategy, eligibility criteria, as well as the broader Cleveland housing, legal, and social systems ecosystem may have been responsible for some of the positive impacts. However, they also created certain limitations, such as the program's limited reach and scope.

The RTC-CL was implemented on July 1, 2020, with the goal of preventing evictions and creating a fairer eviction court process. The program was created with design elements such as narrow eligibility criteria, a flexible staffing model, and a comprehensive outreach strategy. The program's narrow eligibility requirements limit assistance to households with at least one child in the home and with incomes at or below 100% of the federal poverty line. The program is implemented by the United Way of Greater Cleveland, and legal representation is provided by Legal Aid Society of Cleveland (LASC) attorneys, as well as 20 additional contracted lawyers who can provide legal representation in court. Attorneys are encouraged to spend part of their time on non-casework activities and receive training about strategies to manage the stress of the work. Throughout 2024, the program also conducted door-to-door canvassing, targeting tenants who had received summonses in specific neighborhoods and providing them with information about their right to counsel. The study explored how these design features and the Cleveland housing, legal, and social services ecosystems facilitated and constrained the right to counsel policy's reach and effectiveness.

The authors conducted 32 semi-structured interviews with tenant attorneys, tenants who received legal counsel, tenants who did not receive legal counsel, and community organizers. LASC recruited tenant participants by emailing a random sample of 500 people who interacted with the RTC-CL program. The researchers strived for a diverse sample of tenants who could represent a wide range of experiences, although the final sample mirrored those most likely to be evicted in Cleveland, with 78% of participants identifying as female and 62% identifying as Black. Tenant interviews began with a discussion of the participants' current housing situations and then progressed to questions about participants' experiences accessing and utilizing the program or attempting to access the program. The authors also interviewed attorneys and organizers who discussed their involvement with the program and their specific duties. Participants' answers were coded and then reviewed to identify major concepts and themes.

The study found that tenants who received eviction legal services through RTC-CL reported improved housing outcomes, more positive experiences navigating the eviction process, increased awareness of their legal rights, and a greater sense of support compared to tenants who did not receive legal assistance. Interviewees highlighted a few key features of the program that may be contributing to these positive outcomes. For example, RTC-CL's flexible staffing model ensures staff attorneys have enough bandwidth to provide comprehensive and individualized support, enabling tenants to feel heard and to understand their housing rights. One tenant, Serena, noted that her attorney was thoughtful, and made sure she understood what the procedures were, helping her feel confident about the process. The program's narrow eligibility criteria also helped keep attorneys' workloads manageable.

RTC-CL's door-to-door canvassing strategy to connect with potential clients helped increase awareness of the availability of eviction legal services and enabled the program to engage 60 to 80% of eligible tenants, many of whom may not have known about it otherwise. The program's location in the ecosystem of tenant supports enabled attorneys to connect tenants to complementary resources, such as rental assistance, utility assistance, and eviction sealing support, to more fully meet their housing stability needs. Andrea, another program participant, noted that her lawyers helped her navigate the very difficult social services system, and didn't make her feel ashamed for not doing it herself. They were able to get her approved for some programs she didn't think she would be able to access otherwise.

The study's authors note ways in which these same program elements may have introduced certain limitations. The current narrow eligibility criteria only cover a third of tenants in need of eviction assistance in the area. If the program expanded its eligibility criteria to include households without children, it could have reached a wider swath of tenants in need of rental assistance. However, in order to expand its reach, the program would have to raise additional funding to continue to offer the same quality of services and staffing capabilities. The study's authors also note that tenants served by RTC-CL could have benefitted from legal services for housing problems or landlord disputes other than those related to eviction. For example, some tenants reported habitability issues in their units such as mold or bugs. In many instances, a proactive suit could have resolved the issue faster and avoided retaliatory eviction.

The authors noted that tenants who had positive experiences with RTC-CL may have been more inclined to participate in this study than those who had negative experiences, potentially skewing the results. As such, they recommend that future research consider tenants who did not successfully engage with RTC-CL to minimize bias and ensure a balanced understanding of the program's impact. Additionally, the authors encourage further research into the impacts of RTC policies on other aspects of local policies and programs, such as housing court processes or the workloads of legal and social services programs.

The full report can be found here.

Fact of the Week

Every Dollar Invested in Cleveland's Right to Counsel Program Returns $2.47 While Helping Clients Achieve Their Housing Goals

Keywords: right to counsel, tenant protections

Source: Stout (2026). Stout's independent evaluation of Cleveland's Eviction Right to Counsel: Annual report for the period January 1, 2025, through December 31, 2026. Available at: https://bit.ly/4yuwd7e

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IDEAS

Now Open: Application for 2026-2027 Collective Cohort

By NLIHC IDEAS Team

Keywords: Collective, 2026-2027, tenant leaders, community leaders

NLIHC is currently recruiting members for its next Collective cohort! The Collective is a group of tenant advocates and community leaders with lived experience of housing insecurity who work toward housing justice and racial equity in their neighborhoods and greater communities. This group meets regularly with NLIHC staff to address the needs of the nation's low-income people and their families.

Apply to join NLIHC's Collective here.

The application window will be open from July 17 to August 17. Applicants selected for interviews will be contacted by September, and all applicants will be notified of final decisions on October 2.

Those interested in joining the Collective are encouraged to view this application guide before beginning their application. **Please note**: The application guide is **not** the application. The application must be completed online. The guide provides an overview of the questions included in the application. Please feel free to use the document to help prepare your answers for the online application.

If you need assistance or have questions about the application, please email NLIHC Manager of Inclusive Community Engagement, Sid Betancourt, at sbetancourt@nlihc.org.

NLIHC Recognizes Disability Pride Month

By NLIHC IDEAS Team

Keywords: disability, disabled renters, disability rights, health

NLIHC recognizes July as Disability Pride Month, commemorating the landmark passage of the "Americans with Disabilities Act" (ADA) on July 26, 1990. A 2024 report from the CDC found that over 70 million people in the United States live with a disability. Disability Pride Month is a time to uplift the diverse experiences of people living with disabilities and challenge harmful narratives that minimize those communities and their experiences.

According to The Arc, a leading national organization advocating for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD), the 2026 theme for Disability Pride Month is "The World Works Better With Us." This theme highlights the importance of inclusion. Building a world where inclusion, respect, and support are guaranteed for those with disabilities creates a better world for us all.

According to a 2026 report in the *Disability and Health Journal*, renters with disabilities are more likely to face and report poor health, housing quality issues, and affordability challenges compared to non-disabled households. Their research found that disabled households were 5.8 times more likely to report poor or fair health, 3.3 times more likely to report problems with upkeep, 2.7 times more likely to report mold, and twice as likely to report poor sleep and uncomfortable temperatures. The findings in this research highlight the disparity disabled renters and households face in their housing conditions and experience. You can read more about the report in a previous *Memo* article here.

NLIHC's *Opportunity Starts at Home* (OSAH) Campaign prioritizes equitable housing for everyone and has produced materials that highlight disability rights and housing. More information on disability rights and housing from the OSAH campaign can be found here.

As an organization dedicated to racially and socially just housing policy, NLIHC recognizes the vital role people with disabilities play in advancing housing justice. Acknowledging and celebrating the importance of this community and their lived experiences can help improve access and support equitable outcomes that strengthen our efforts to ensure people with the lowest incomes can access safe, affordable homes in communities of their choice.

NLIHC Careers

NLIHC Seeks Senior Vice President, Advancement

The Senior Vice President, Advancement will report to the president and chief executive officer of the National Low Income Housing Coalition (NLIHC) and will lead the organization's comprehensive advancement strategy, overseeing all philanthropic revenue and donor engagement efforts to sustain and grow NLIHC's impact.

This position is responsible for designing and executing a multi-year resource development strategy aligned with NLIHC's strategic priorities. The role will lead all aspects of development, including major gifts, planned giving, institutional fundraising, sponsorships, and fund development campaigns. The SVP will serve as a key member of the senior leadership team, contributing to organization-wide strategy and ensuring alignment between revenue generation and programmatic goals.

The salary range for this position is contingent upon experience and is from $165,000 - $175,000. This is a remote position with regular travel to Washington, DC required. Regular travel to Washington, DC is required for senior leadership retreats, board meetings, and key organizational events. The nature of the role also requires a proactive communication style to maintain a deep integration with the DC-based staff and the organizational culture.

An equal opportunity, affirmative action employer, NLIHC offers a competitive salary and benefits package. Interested candidates should submit a resume, cover letter (including salary requirements), writing sample, and a portfolio of advancement accomplishments to Jamaal Gilani, Director of People and Culture, via email at jgilani@nlihc.org.

For more information about this opportunity, visit: https://nlihc.org/about/opportunities

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NLIHC News

NLIHC in the News for the Week of July 13

The following are some of the news stories to which NLIHC contributed during the week of July 13:

- "A look at the new regulations and incentives in the housing bill set to become law," *PBS*, July 13, at: https://tr.ee/vrvASq
- "How will the bipartisan housing bill affect the affordability crisis?" *The Week*, July 15, at: https://tr.ee/auz63x
- "What the ROAD to Housing Act means for Chicago," *WBEZ Chicago*, July 15, at: https://tr.ee/CXWd2l

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Where to Find Us – July 20

- AASC Conference – Austin, TX, August 23-24 (Tia Turner)

NLIHC Staff

Sarah Abdelhadi, Manager, State and Local Research
Andrew Aurand, Senior Vice President for Research, x245
Bridgette Barbosa, Graphic Design Intern
Sidney Betancourt, Manager, Inclusive Community Engagement, x200
Kayla Blackwell, Senior Housing Policy Analyst, x231
Victoria Bourret, Manager, State and Local Research Outreach, x244
Alayna Calabro, Senior Policy Analyst, x252
Billy Cerullo, Manager, Training and Innovation
Adelle Chenier, Senior Director of Events
Esther Colón-Bermúdez, Research Analyst
Lakesha Dawson, Director of Operations and Accounting
Neha Darisi, Field Intern
Lindsay Duvall, Manager, Member Engagement, x206
Thaddaeus Elliott, Housing Advocacy Organizer
Dan Emmanuel, Director, Research, x316
Treasure Evans, IDEAS Intern
Janelle Flowers, Operations Coordinator
Jamaal Gilani, Director of People and Culture

Kayla Gilchrist, Senior Housing Advocacy Organizer
David Gonzalez Rice, Senior Vice President of Public Policy
Raquel Harati, Research Analyst
Nathan Hertzberg, Research Intern
Danita Humphries, Executive Operations Manager, x226
Nada Hussein, Research Analyst, x264
Haadia Hyder, Strategic Partnerships & Campaigns Intern
Kenza Idrissi Janati, Housing Advocacy Coordinator
Kim Johnson, Senior Director of Policy, x243
Sarita Kelkar, Policy Intern
Mayerline Louis-Juste, Project Manager, *Strategic Partnerships*, x201
Lisa Marlow, Senior Director of Communications, x813
Meghan Mertyris, Senior Disaster Housing Recovery Analyst
Julian Mura-Kröger, Research Intern
Khara Norris, Senior Vice President of Operations and Finance, x242
Naiya Oden, Housing Trust Fund Research Intern
Libby O'Neill, Senior Policy Analyst
Noah Patton, Director, Disaster Recovery, x227
Mackenzie Pish, Research Analyst
Benja Reilly, Development Coordinator, x234
Zenayah Roache, Housing Advocacy Organizer
Dee Ross, Tenant Leader Fellow
Gabrielle Ross, Manager, IDEAS, x208
Craig Schaar, Data Systems Analyst
Brooke Schipporeit, Senior Director, Field Organizing and Innovation, x233
Amin Sobhani, DHR Intern
Kristen Stehling, Fund Development Director
Carlton Taylor, Jr., Senior Graphic Communications Coordinator
Hawa Tallo Sow, Development Intern
Cecily Thomas, Development Coordinator, x810
Tia Turner, Project Manager, *Our Homes, Our Votes*
Julie Walker, Project Manager, *Opportunity Starts at Home*
Brandon Weil, Graphic Communications Manager
Chantelle Wilkinson, Vice President, Strategic Partnerships & Campaigns, x230
Renee Williams, Senior Advisor for Public Policy
Renee M. Willis, President and CEO, x247
Tiara Wood, Communications Coordinator