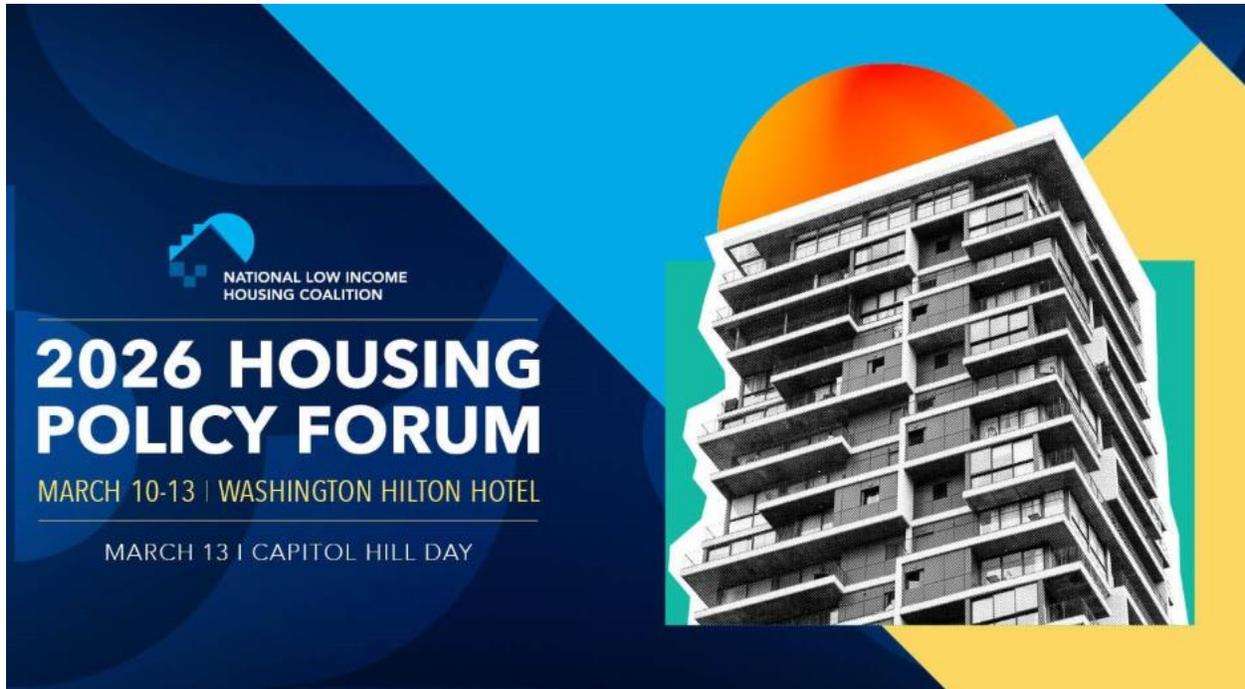




Memo To Members & Partners

A weekly newsletter from the National Low Income Housing Coalition

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March 9, 2026



In this issue of Memo to Members & Partners, we're sharing some highlights of what to expect during the March 10-13, 2026, NLIHC Housing Policy Forum. If you're in Washington, D.C. this week, we hope to see you there. For those unable to attend #Forum26, we look forward to welcoming you to Forum 2027, March 9-12!

Memo to Members & Partners will take a break on Monday, March 16 and return on Monday, March 23.

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Housing Policy Forum

Coming Together in a Moment that Demands Courage

By Renee M. Willis, NLIHC President and CEO

Dear NLIHC Partners, Members, and Friends,

This week, we will welcome advocates, tenant leaders, researchers, policymakers, and organizers from across the country to Washington, D.C. for the Housing Policy Forum hosted by the National Low Income Housing Coalition. At a time when the stakes for housing justice feel higher than ever, this gathering represents more than a conference. It is an opportunity to reconnect with one another, sharpen our shared strategies, and renew our collective commitment to ensuring that everyone has a safe, stable, and affordable place to call home.

Many of you reading this will be in the room with us next week. For those who won't be able to join us this year, please know that this gathering is part of an ongoing conversation and a growing community of people committed to solving the nation's housing challenges. We hope to make space for you at the 2027 Housing Policy Forum and look forward to welcoming even more voices into this work.

We come together at a moment when the need for stable, affordable housing has never been more urgent.

Across the country, families and communities are navigating rising rents, displacement, natural disasters, and policies that too often leave the most vulnerable behind. This is the moment we are meeting. Yet in every corner of the country, we also see something powerful: people organizing, speaking out, and refusing to accept that housing instability should be the norm.

That spirit is what brings us together.

The Housing Policy Forum is where tenant leaders bring the lived expertise that must shape policy. It is where researchers share data that help illuminate solutions. It is where advocates and organizers exchange strategies and strengthen partnerships that move our work forward. It is where our state and Tribal partners connect and share lessons from communities across the country. It is where policymakers hear directly from the communities most affected by the decisions made in Washington. And it is where the next generation of leaders—including our Generation Housing Justice fellows and members of the Collective—come together with experienced advocates to deepen their leadership and strengthen this work for the future.

Our work has always required courage—the courage to challenge systems that have persisted for generations, to speak about difficult truths in inequity, and to imagine a future that looks different from the past.

Few people embody that spirit more than Shirely Sherrod, whose lifetime of organizing and advocacy has inspired generations of leaders—including our entire Tenant Collective. Mrs. Sherrod, a longtime civil rights activist and author of *The Courage to Hope*, will receive this year's Cushing N. Dolbeare Lifetime Service Award, the Coalition's highest honor recognizing individuals whose work has helped transform the landscape of housing opportunity and justice.

Her story reminds us that meaningful change is built through persistence, courage, and the power of people working together. Her example also reminds us that lasting change requires action.

At the culmination of the Forum, more than 300 advocates will participate in Capitol Hill Day, meeting with congressional offices to carry forward the drumbeat of housing solutions. Together, they will share the stories, research, and solutions that must guide federal housing policy and call for the bold action needed to ensure that everyone in this country has a place to call home.

At its core, the Housing Policy Forum is about community—the community we build when people committed to solving the nation's housing challenges come together with clarity, courage, and hope. In a moment like this, when the path forward demands both courage and persistence, it is community that will carry our work forward.

With gratitude and resolve,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'R. N. V.' with a stylized flourish at the end.

Renee M. Willis
President and CEO
National Low Income Housing Coalition

Welcoming Bakari Sellers, Brian Goldstone, Tenant Leaders, and Housing Advocates

The 2026 Forum will feature conversations with key leaders in Congress, as well as an array of other compelling speakers and panelists. Participants will have the opportunity to engage with and learn from thought leaders, tenant and community leaders, policy experts, researchers, and housing practitioners who will discuss actions needed to protect and expand affordable housing solutions.

Opening Plenary – March 11, 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm ET

A panel discussion with Dushaw Hockett and Rachel D. Godsil from the Perception Institute, “Reclaiming Narrative Power in a Polarized America,” will share new research and insights on polarization and narrative, and discuss how advocates can bridge divides by communicating with greater clarity, courage, and strategic intent.

Bakari Sellers, *New York Times* best-selling author, attorney, civil rights activist, and political commentator, will join NLIHC’s President and CEO Renee M. Willis for a fireside chat. Sellers has dedicated his career to advancing racial equity. At the age of 22, he was the nation's youngest Black elected legislator. From 2006 to 2014, Sellers represented South Carolina’s 90th district in the state House of Representatives. His ongoing work and influence is revered as a leading voice for his generation. As a CNN analyst, Sellers has elevated public discourse and guided conversations toward meaningful resolution.

Plenary – March 12, 8:30 am – 9:40 am ET

Housing Policy Forum and Leadership Awards Reception supporter, Zillow Group, will present a panel discussion on “Technology and Renter Protections: Tools to Expand Access, Stability, and Equity.” This session brings together advocates, researchers, and industry leaders to examine renter focused tools designed to expand access, strengthen tenant protections, and support housing stability. The discussion will explore how technology can be aligned with tenant protections, affordability, and racial equity—while ensuring transparency, accountability, and meaningful benefit for renters.

Closing Plenary – March 12, 3:30 pm – 5:00 pm ET

During the “Getting Past Polarization in Housing Policy” panel discussion, NLIHC senior staff will moderate a conversation with members of the U.S. Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs staff who helped to shape bipartisan housing legislation in the 119th Congress.

Housing justice leaders Rob Robinson and Kennetha Patterson will join journalist Brian Goldstone for the “When Housing is Out of Reach” panel to discuss a common but often hidden problem facing our nation: working while experiencing homelessness. In this fireside chat conversation, Robinson and Patterson will speak from unique experiences that closely tie to the themes discussed in Goldstone's best-selling book, *There is No Place for Us: Working and Homeless in America*. Goldstone will be selling and signing copies of his acclaimed book for Forum attendees on Thursday between 12:00 pm and 1:00 pm.

Breakout Sessions on Topics Ranging from Housing Justice to Disaster Recovery

NLIHC’s Housing Policy Forum 2026 will feature an array of breakout sessions in which attendees can engage with and learn from thought leaders, policy experts, researchers, tenant advocates, affordable housing practitioners, and more!

Breakout Session 1: An Ecosystems Approach to Housing Justice - NLIHC’s State & Local Research team identifies, uplifts, and examines the mechanisms by which stakeholders at the state and local level can ensure safe, accessible, equitable, and affordable housing for the lowest income renters. In this session, we will explore the importance of using an “ecosystems approach” to advancing housing justice at the state and local level—that is, taking into account the full landscape of tenant protections and affordable housing policies in order to maximize sustained, positive impacts for tenants. We will also share the ways in which our team is enhancing our publicly available resources and research to better support ecosystems thinking.

- Urvi Patel, policy analyst, Housing and Income Security, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities
- Noel Andrés Poyo, principal, Poyo Consulting - Affordable Housing, Community Development & Impact Finance
- Emily A. Benfer, professor of law, George Washington Law School, Milken Institute School of Public Health; senior fellow, National Housing Law Project; research collaborator, Eviction Lab at Princeton University
- Korey Johnson, Local Solutions Support Center
- Moderator: NLIHC State & Local Research Team

(Closed to Press) Breakout Session 2: Immigrant Advocates are Housing Advocates: The State of Immigration Rights and Housing Justice - Across the nation, communities, advocates, and service providers are struggling to meet the housing needs of immigrants amid an ongoing and worsening affordable housing crisis. Immigrants face unique challenges in obtaining affordable housing, as some newcomers struggle to secure and maintain the permits needed to legally work, and many are ineligible for most federal benefits and too often met with discrimination in their new community. More recently, targeted attacks have created an increasingly hostile environment where many immigrants fear for their safety. Targeted attacks on the immigrant community also make it increasingly difficult for people to stably work, pay their rent, and fully exercise their rights as tenants. This panel will explore the ways that immigration impacts the state of affordable housing, best practices for prioritizing safety in

political advocacy, messaging to counter anti-immigrant sentiments, and strategies for advocates to advance safe, accessible, and affordable housing for all.

- Adriana Cadena, Protecting Immigrant Families
- Sarah Krieger, National Immigration Law Center
- Foluke Akkani, Housing Action Illinois
- Sosseh Prom, African Communities Together
- Opening Remarks: Chantelle Wilkinson, NLIHC
- Opening Remarks: Victoria Morales and Lucas Schrage, Project Home
- Moderator: Julie Walker, NLIHC

Breakout Session 3: Higher Ground: Disaster Related Organizing at the State and Local Levels - Disasters, often driven by climate change, are increasing in frequency and severity. Simultaneously, the country's disaster response and recovery system is decentralizing, placing more responsibility on state and local governments who often do not have the resources or the experience to effectively respond. As a result, state and local organizing that integrates and advocates for equitable disaster response and recovery programs become increasingly important. This panel will feature advocates and organizers working within their states and communities to increase equitable programs, create best practices, and—sometimes—fill in the gaps in response and recovery systems themselves. Attendees will have the opportunity to hear how they can begin organizing around disaster response and recovery in their areas to ensure every disaster survivor receives the assistance they need to fully recover.

- Toi Jean Carter, director, Louisiana Just Recovery Network
- Maritere Padilla Rodríguez, senior director of policy and advocacy, Hispanic Federation
- Gamelyn Oduardo, community development and planning manager, Hispanic Federation
- Stephanie Watkins-Cruz, director of housing policy, North Carolina Inclusive Disaster Recovery Network & North Carolina Housing Coalition
- Jessica Arriens, senior program manager of climate and energy policy, Appalachian Flood Resilience Coalition & National Wildlife Federation
- Moderator: Gabrielle Walton, federal campaign coordinator, Chesapeake Climate Action Network

(Closed Session) Breakout Session 4

Breakout Session 5: From the Ground Up: Building Political Will Amid Federal Disarray - As the nation's political climate grows more turbulent, state and local leaders are stepping up to build power and drive meaningful change. This session will highlight strategies communities are employing to strengthen local movements and create political will to advance solutions.

- Tracy Beard, coalition coordinator, Housing For All Tennessee
- Stephanie Watkins-Cruz, director of housing policy, North Carolina Housing Coalition
- Quiana Fisher, executive director, Texas Housers
- Moderator: Ramina Davidson, NLIHC

(Closed to Press) Breakout Session 6: Data, Evidence-Based Policymaking, and Democracy

- The Trump administration seeks to reduce and reorganize the federal government with the ultimate goal of consolidating power. Our panel seeks to understand the threats this poses to federal housing data and what implies evidence-based policymaking and democratic participation in housing policy more broadly. Through a combination of presentations and dialogue, session participants will gain a clear picture of housing data provided by the federal government and current threats to these data, as well as a deeper understanding of the implications for housing policy.

- Kathryn Howell, director, National Center for Smart Growth Research and Education; associate professor, University of Maryland Urban Studies & Planning Program
- Matt Hauge, director of communications & community outreach, Polk County Housing Trust Fund
- Alia Fierro, senior housing policy advisor, U.S. Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs
- Moderator: Dan Emmanuel, NLIHC

Breakout Session 7: Wide Open Spaces: Advancing Housing Policy in Rural and Tribal Communities

- Rural residents face an extreme shortage of decent, safe, and affordable housing, compounded by limited resources and geographic barriers. In the face of great obstacles, however, Tribal and rural communities have risen against extractive industries and worked to meet their own housing needs. Join this workshop to learn how Native leaders and tenant advocates are addressing the gaps left by decades of disinvestment and strengthening their communities in the process. Speakers will discuss federal policies such as “The Native American Housing and Self-Determination Act of 1996” (NAHASDA), heirs’ property in disasters, and strategies for building trust among rural renters.

- Alicia Sebastian, California Coalition for Rural Housing executive director
- Joey Nathan, Northern Ponca Housing Authority, UNAHA board member
- Mel Willie, senior director of Native American Partnerships & Strategy, NeighborWorks America
- Kayla Blackwell, NLIHC
- Moderator: Kenza Idrissi Janati, NLIHC

Breakout Session 8: What's at Stake for Housing on the Ballot and in the Supreme Court

- As the nation prepares for the 2026 midterm elections, housing advocates face both tremendous opportunities and urgent challenges. From state and local ballot measures advancing affordable housing and renters’ rights to high-profile Supreme Court cases shaping the legal landscape of voting and fair representation, this session will explore the intersection of democracy and housing justice. The session will also highlight strategies to mobilize voters ahead of the 2026 midterm elections, featuring insights from NLIHC’s Our Homes, Our Votes campaign and partners working on the ground to close voter turnout gaps, ensure voter ID access, and strengthen nonpartisan housing-centered advocacy. Attendees will gain practical tools to engage residents, build partnerships with voting rights organizations, and elevate housing as a defining election issue.

- Demetria McCain, director of policy, Legal Defense Fund
- Kenneth Williamson, program and policy analyst, National Alliance to End Homelessness
- Dr. Bambi Hayes-Brown, president and CEO, Georgia ACT
- Stephanie Demmons, national partnerships manager, VoterRiders
- Bridget Knighton, former *Our Homes, Our Votes* tenant fellow
- Chantelle Wilkinson, NLIHC
- Moderator: Tia Turner, NLIHC

(Closed to Press) Breakout Session 9: Meeting the Moment: Strategizing to Protect and Expand Proven Housing Solutions - This workshop will provide space for attendees to collaborate and brainstorm how we will creatively advance the housing justice movement, from strengthening tenant protections and civil rights to ensuring that both existing and new housing is safe, accessible, and deeply affordable to those at the lowest incomes. All advocates and ideas (big and small) are welcome.

- David Gonzalez Rice, NLIHC
- Ramina Davidson, NLIHC
- Renee Williams, NLIHC

Breakout Session 10: Turning the Tables: How Tenants Reclaimed Their Homes and Their Future - In Minneapolis, a group of determined tenants transformed their frustration into collective action—organizing, asserting their rights, and ultimately purchasing their building to remove a neglectful landlord. What began as a fight for safe and dignified housing became a powerful example of tenant-led ownership and community control. This session will feature Chloe Jackson, one of the tenant leaders who drove this effort, sharing how they built trust, navigated legal and financial barriers, and reimagined what is possible when tenants move from surviving displacement to shaping their own housing futures. Their story offers a blueprint for tenant power, collective ownership, and lasting housing justice.

- Chloe Jackson, Sky without Limits, United Renters for Justice

Breakout Session 11: Power: Use it or Lose It – An Organizing Approach to Interacting with Elected Officials - There is a principle of organizing that says, “Power: use it or lose it.” Through the lens of a community organizer, this session will examine how we assert our power in meetings with elected officials to achieve our goals. In addition to discussing important considerations when planning and executing a meeting with an elected official, this session will also focus on leveraging such meetings as tools for deepening and increasing engagement among coalition members.

- Billy Cerullo, NLIHC

Breakout Session 12: Getting the Narrative Right: Combating Misinformation with Research and Effective Storytelling - How can we make housing justice happen through a bold, realistic vision grounded in truth? Shifting the narrative requires dispelling myths and translating complex issues into clear, compelling messages that resonate with the audience.

While the housing and homelessness crisis draws media and policymakers' attention, its causes and solutions are often misunderstood and distorted by misinformation. Discuss how to convey accurate messaging, reduce stigma, and debunk myths by leveraging current research and effective storytelling. Explore examples of strategies and campaigns that resonate with and engage new audiences, inspire advocacy, and encourage dialogue among reporters, policymakers, and leaders from other sectors.

- Marisol Bello, Housing Narrative Lab
- Celinda Lake, Lake Research Partners
- Jesse Rabinowitz, National Homelessness Law Center
- George Stallings, American Red Cross
- Tiara Wood, NLIHC
- Moderator: Lisa Marlow, NLIHC

Recognizing Outstanding Achievements: Organizing

NLIHC's [Organizing Awards](#) recognize outstanding achievements in statewide, regional, citywide, neighborhood, or resident organizing that further NLIHC's mission of ensuring that people with the lowest incomes have quality homes that are accessible and affordable in communities of their choice.

We are pleased to announce the recipients of the 2026 Organizing Awards! [Denver Metro Tenants Union](#) (Denver, CO) will receive the Tenant-Led Organizing Award, and [Community Development Alliance](#) (Milwaukee, WI) will receive the Local Organizing Award.

Denver Metro Tenants Union (DMTU) is a tenant-led organization building collective power across the greater Denver metro area to help renters access safe, stable, and dignified housing. In 2025, through its *Safe and Healthy Homes* campaign, DMTU won meaningful new enforcement tools to ensure renters' rights to safe and healthy homes are upheld. The campaign won a budget amendment to add a public health investigator, created and funded a public dashboard of rental property complaints and violations, and secured commitments from the mayor's office to strengthen the Residential Rental Licensing Program by requiring landlords to resolve violations and fines before renewing their licenses.

Community Development Alliance (CDA) is a Milwaukee-based charitable organization advancing racial equity by working to ensure every Milwaukeean has a quality affordable home and by prioritizing equitable homeownership for Black and Latino households. Its work is guided by the Resident Advisory Council on Housing, a group of residents from across Milwaukee County, including individuals who currently or previously experienced housing instability. Recently, CDA led a successful campaign to reinstate \$1.4 million in down-payment assistance to the city's 2026 budget.

Two representatives from each organization will accept their awards and participate in a plenary panel discussion during the Housing Policy Forum Organizing Awards Ceremony on Thursday, March 12.

Please join NLIHC in congratulating this year's Organizing Award honorees!

Celebrating Leadership Award Honorees!

NLIHC will honor our 2026 Housing Leadership Awards recipients: The Congressional Public Housing Caucus, Shirley Sherrod, Protecting Immigrant Families (PIF) Coalition, Kennetha Patterson, and Linda Lee Soderstrom. These exceptional leaders will be recognized at NLIHC's 43rd Annual Housing Leadership Awards Reception, held on the second evening of the NLIHC Housing Policy Forum 2026, at the Washington Hilton Hotel in Washington, D.C.

The NLIHC Housing Leadership Awards celebrate and honor individual leaders and organizations for their outstanding contributions to affordable housing for those most in need.

The Congressional Public Housing Caucus (CPHC) will receive the Edward W. Brooke Housing Leadership Award for their work to ensure that public housing remains a stable, safe, and quality option for low-income individuals and families and serves as a platform for lawmakers to collaborate on solutions that address the challenges facing public housing. The CPHC is dedicated to making public housing a national priority and ensuring that federal policies support the American families who depend on it.

Shirley Sherrod will receive the Cushing Niles Dolbeare Lifetime Service Award for her invaluable contributions as a national civil rights trailblazer, advocate, and global thought leader in agriculture policy and its impact on rural marginalized communities. In 1969, she co-founded the nation's first community land trust that served as a safe haven for Black farmers who were removed from their land.

The Protecting Immigrant Families (PIF) Coalition will receive the Sheila Crowley Housing Justice Award for their tireless fight for immigrant families' access to quality health care, nutrition, housing, economic supports, and other public services. PIF is a nonprofit organization that bridges the gap between leading advocates for immigrant rights and health and social services.

Kennetha Patterson and Linda Lee Soderstrom will receive the 2026 Loraine Brown Resident Leader Award. Instituted in 2025, the Loraine Brown Resident Leader Award is named after NLIHC Board Member Loraine Brown and honors a person living in subsidized housing who has shown dedication to helping tenants, people experiencing homelessness, and their community.

Recognize these outstanding leaders by making a [donation](#) to NLIHC in their honor!

Advocates Meet with their Member of Congress

Advocates from across the country will meet on Capitol Hill for the 2026 Capitol Hill Day on Friday, March 13.

Capitol Hill Day is the last day of NLIHC's annual Housing Policy Forum. The day is an opportunity for advocates to meet with members of Congress and their staff to discuss housing and homelessness solutions needed in their communities.

To prepare for a series of meetings with policymakers, NLIHC hosted a [webinar](#) to:

- Review NLIHC's 2026 policy priorities
- Discuss the best practices for conveying your message
- Review the [2026 Capitol Hill Day Advocacy Toolkit](#)

Stay Engaged Through Social Media

By Tiara Wood, NLIHC Communications Coordinator and Carlton Taylor, Jr., NLIHC Senior Graphic Communications Coordinator

Keywords: stay connected, social media

From posting pictures and content to a 70-inch social wall through NLIHC's EventsAir application to posing for a special 360-degree camera, #Forum26 attendees will be encouraged to share their experience on social media and engage with attendees and those who wish they attended!

Be on the lookout for members of the NLIHC's Communications team. They will be present across sessions and plenaries capturing candid moments from the conference that will be shared on NLIHC's social platforms. You are also invited to engage with NLIHC on social media.

Share your experiences on your chosen social media platform using #Forum26.

Stay in the know with all NLIHC activities by following us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Bluesky](#), [LinkedIn](#) or [X](#) and visit our [Linktree](#) to find a streamlined way to access our key resources, including *Memo to Members & Partners* articles, advocacy tools, and recent publications.

Research

NLIHC Finds Shortage of 7.2 Million Affordable and Available Homes for Extremely Low-Income Renters

By Raquel Harati, NLIHC Research Analyst

Keywords: The Gap, housing shortage, affordable housing, severe housing cost burdens, extremely low-income renters, housing policy

NLIHC released its annual report, *The Gap: A Shortage of Affordable Homes*, on Thursday, March 5. The report finds that extremely low-income renters in the United States face a shortage of 7.2 million affordable and available rental homes. This shortage of affordable housing leaves extremely low-income renters saddled with the highest rates of housing cost burdens among any income group, with 87% spending more than 30% of their income on housing and 74% facing severe cost burdens, spending more than 50% of their income. The report finds that nearly a quarter of all renter households across the country fall into the category of having extremely low incomes, demonstrating the significant share of the market that these renters represent. The report's findings underscore the dire need for legislators to prioritize the affordability challenges of extremely low-income renters in U.S. housing policy.

For every 100 renter households with extremely low incomes, only 35 affordable and available rental homes exist nationally. No state or major metropolitan area has a sufficient supply of affordable and available homes for extremely low-income renters. Among states, the supply of affordable and available rental homes ranges from 16 affordable and available homes for every 100 extremely low-income renter households in Nevada to 73 in South Dakota. In 13 of the country's 50 largest metropolitan areas, the absolute shortage of homes affordable and available to the lowest-income renters exceeds 100,000 rental homes. While affordability challenges for renters further up the income ladder do emerge in some high-cost communities, extremely low-income renters face the most acute affordability challenges—and they face them everywhere throughout the country.

Nationally, Black, Latino, American Indian or Alaska Native (AIAN), and Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander (NHPI) households are disproportionately impacted by the shortage of affordable and available rental homes for extremely low-income renters since they are disproportionately represented in this group. Eighteen percent of Black households, 16% of AIAN households, 15% of NHPI households, and 13% of Latino households are extremely low-income renters, compared to just 6% of white non-Latino households. Similarly, people of color among these groups also disproportionately experience housing cost burdens.

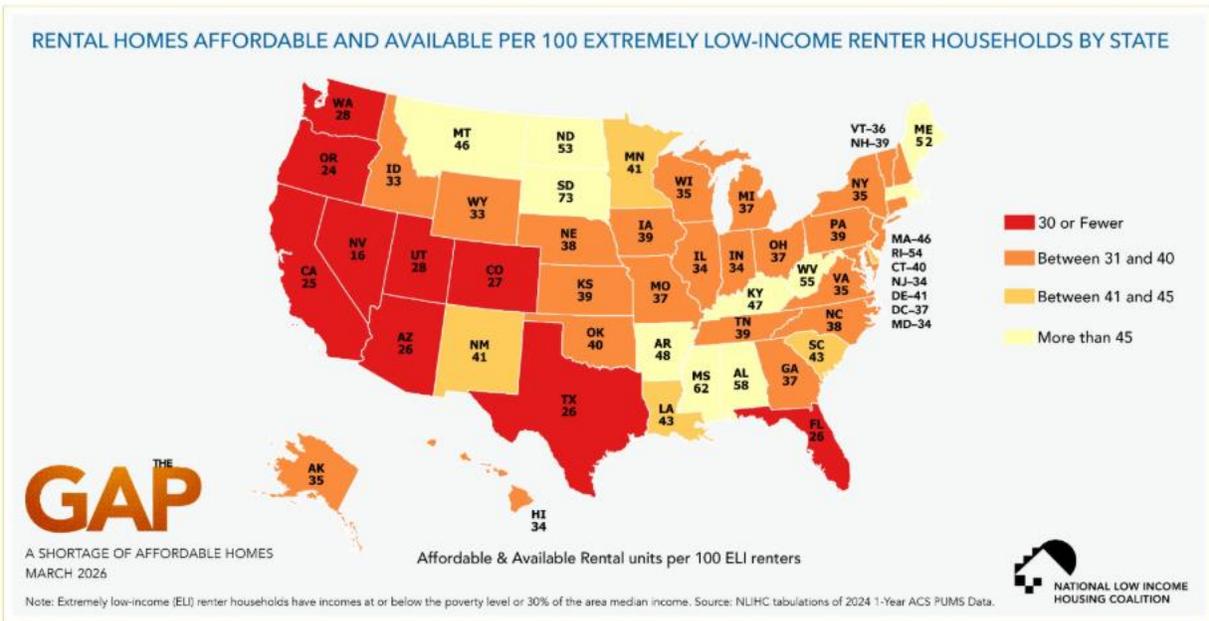
The report explores how the private market alone is fundamentally unable to meet the needs of extremely low-income renters. Insufficient federal funding for housing assistance programs only exacerbates this problem—leaving three out of four eligible renter households without support. There is a great need to expand federal funding through bipartisan legislation to ensure all households who qualify for rental assistance actually receive it. Funding deeply targeted programs like the national Housing Trust Fund, Housing Choice Vouchers, and public housing can alleviate the shortage of affordable housing for the lowest-income renters. Reforms should also be made to ensure program efficiency and incentivize landlord participation. Investments should be made in emergency rental assistance programs to assist households experiencing short-term financial hardships as well. These actions are needed to preserve and expand the supply of deeply affordable housing, close the gap between incomes and rents, and promote housing stability for the lowest-income renters across the country.

Read the full 2026 *The Gap* report and find an interactive state map at: <https://nlihc.org/gap>. Free copies of *The Gap* will be available to Forum 2026 attendees.

Fact of the Week

No State has an Adequate Supply of Affordable and Available Rental Homes for the Lowest-Income Renters

Keywords: The Gap, housing shortage, affordable housing, extremely low-income renters, housing policy, states



Source: *The Gap: A Shortage of Affordable Homes*, NLIHC 2026. <https://nlihc.org/gap>

Our Homes, Our Votes

What's at Stake for Housing on the Ballot and in the Supreme Court

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

Keywords: OHOV, annual Forum, NLIHC, Supreme Court, local voting power, GOTV, webinar

Hosted by [Our Homes, Our Votes](#) at the [2026 Housing Policy Forum](#), “What’s at Stake for Housing on the Ballot and in the Supreme Court” breakout session will examine the powerful connection between housing justice and democracy at a pivotal moment for our movement. As the nation prepares for the 2026 midterm elections, housing advocates must navigate both tremendous opportunities and urgent challenges. From state and local ballot measures advancing affordable housing and renters’ rights to high-profile Supreme Court cases shaping voting rights and fair representation, this session will explore what’s at stake for low-income renters—and how housing organizations can lead in response.

Panelists will discuss emerging voter ID requirements, state-level proposals often referred to as “mini SAVE Acts,” and the broader legal landscape impacting civic participation. The session will also highlight strategies to mobilize voters ahead of the 2026 midterms, close turnout gaps among low-income renters, and strengthen nonpartisan, housing-centered advocacy.

Attendees will leave with practical tools to:

- Engage residents in nonpartisan civic participation
- Build partnerships with voting rights organizations
- Navigate voter ID and election policy changes
- Elevate housing as a defining issue in 2026

Free printed copies of the recent “[Turning Renters into Voters: Lessons in Engaging Low-Income Communities](#)” will be available to Forum 2026 attendees.

Join Us Before Forum: Our Homes, Our Votes Webinar

Ahead of Forum, we invite you to [join](#) the next session in the *Our Homes, Our Votes* [monthly webinar](#) series on March 9 at 3:00 pm ET. This session will be focused on “[Building Voting Power Locally: How Local Elections Set the Stage for 2026](#).” This webinar will highlight how local and state advocacy efforts shape housing policy outcomes and help build the civic infrastructure necessary to drive turnout in federal elections. Participants will learn how local engagement strengthens long-term voter participation and advances housing justice priorities.

Speakers from [New PA Project](#) will discuss building durable civic engagement infrastructure at the local and state levels, and [VoteRiders](#) will provide practical guidance on navigating voter ID requirements and emerging state-level proposals often referred to as “mini SAVE Acts.”

[Register today](#) and join us as we build housing-centered voter power heading into Forum and the 2026 midterms.

Tenant Talk Live

Resources: 3/2 “Tenant Talk Live” Meeting; Take Action on Mixed-Status Rule at NLIHC Housing Policy Forum!

By Sid Betancourt, NLIHC Manager, Inclusive Community Engagement

Keywords: Mixed-status rules, POWER-LA, Keep Families Together

This month’s “Tenant Talk Live” featured a discussion on HUD’s proposed mixed-status rule. NLIHC Manager of Inclusive Community Engagement Sid Betancourt led the call featuring guests Megan Choi and Tabatha Yelos of POWER-LA. Megan and Tabatha discussed the proposed rule’s impacts on immigrant families and how residents and tenant leaders can get

involved. They also shared information about the **Keep Families Together** campaign, which includes prompts for commenting on the proposed rule and how tenants in Los Angeles are fighting back against the proposal. To learn more, view the recording [here](#).

Advocates will have an opportunity to comment on HUD's proposed rule, in addition to other HUD regulations, at [NLIHC's Housing Policy Forum](#), taking place March 10-13, 2026. NLIHC staff will be present to answer questions about the proposed rules and help advocates comment at the Advocacy Center, located in the International Terrace, on Wednesday, March 11 and Thursday, March 12.

Meeting Resources and Information

- View the recording from Monday's call [here](#).
- Take action and learn more about HUD's proposed mixed-status rule from the [Keep Families Together campaign!](#)
- Sign up to receive [updates from the Keep Families Together Campaign!](#)

Register for the next "Tenant Talk Live" [here!](#)

Opportunity Starts at Home

***Opportunity Starts at Home* Hosts Immigration Advocacy Panel at 2026 NLIHC Housing Policy Forum**

By Ella Izenour, NLIHC *Opportunity Starts at Home* Intern and Julie Walker, NLIHC Project Manager, *Opportunity Starts at Home*

Keywords: Opportunity Starts at Home, multi-sector, immigration rights

The [Opportunity Starts at Home](#) (OSAH) Campaign will host a panel with OSAH national and state partners, "Immigrant Advocates are Housing Advocates: The State of Immigration Rights and Housing Justice," at the [2026 NLIHC Housing Policy Forum](#) in Washington, D.C., on Wednesday, March 11. The session, which is closed to press, will take place from 3:45 to 5 pm ET at the Washington Hilton Hotel.

Across the nation, communities, advocates, and service providers are struggling to meet the housing needs of immigrant families amidst an ongoing and worsening affordable housing crisis. Immigrant communities face unique challenges in obtaining affordable housing, as some newcomers struggle to secure and maintain the permits needed to legally work and many are ineligible for most federal benefits and too often met with hostility and discrimination in their new community.

More recently, targeted attacks by ICE have created an increasingly hostile environment where many immigrants fear for their safety, making it difficult for people to stably work, pay their rent, and fully exercise their rights as tenants. While immigrants are often used as scapegoats by politicians, immigrants are in fact critical to the creation of affordable housing in communities across the United States. The panel will explore the ways that immigration impacts the state of affordable housing, best practices for prioritizing safety in political advocacy, messaging to counter anti-immigrant sentiments, and strategies for advocates to further safe, accessible, and affordable housing for all.

NLIHC News

Where to Find Us – March 9

- [Housing California 2026 Conference](#) – Sacramento, CA, March 18-20 (David Gonzalez Rice)
 - [Florida Disaster Collaboration Conference](#) – Orlando, FL, April 20-21 (Noah Patton)
 - [National VOAD Conference](#) – Reno, NV, May 4-7 (Noah Patton & Meghan Mertyris)
 - [National Adaption Forum](#) – Pittsburgh, PA, May 12-14 (Noah Patton)
 - [NeighborWorks Montana Housing Conference](#) – Fairmont Hot Springs, MT, May 18-20 (Nada Hussein)
 - [Minnesota's Affordable Housing Summit 2026](#) – Minneapolis, MN (in-person), June 4, (Renee M. Willis, Keynote Speaker)
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