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Point of View

HUD Plans to Increase Rents and Impose Work Requirements – by *Diane Yentel, NLIHC President and CEO*

Last week, I read an internal HUD draft bill that confirmed what many of us suspected: Secretary Carson is planning, through his FY19 budget request and accompanying legislation, to propose increasing rent burdens for all people in all HUD-subsidized homes. HUD will also propose allowing minimum work requirements of up to 32 hours a week for some subsidized housing residents. As homelessness increases and the housing crisis intensifies in communities across the country, the administration is focusing its efforts on increasing rents and other burdens for the lowest income and most vulnerable households in HUD-subsidized homes, which may further increase homelessness over time.

The proposed rent increases target the very poorest people, including seniors and people with disabilities living on fixed incomes and already at significant risk of homelessness. Today, most families receiving federal housing assistance pay 30% of their adjusted income as rent. Under HUD's proposal, they would instead have to pay 35% of their gross income or the amount earned by working 15 hours a week at federal minimum wage, whichever is higher. This means that HUD would essentially set a new mandatory minimum monthly rent of \$152.25, three times higher than the current minimum rent that some housing providers may apply to families in subsidized homes. By eliminating income deductions in determining rents, HUD would increase rents most significantly for families with high medical or child care expenses.

Housing benefits are designed to help people when they fall on hard times, like when they are unemployed or underemployed, and to care for those with the greatest need for assistance, including seniors, people with disabilities, and children. Without housing assistance, low income people face a greater risk of eviction and homelessness – circumstances that make it even more challenging to maintain a job.

The majority of people receiving housing subsidies are elderly, disabled or already include someone who works at a low-wage job. Of the remaining households, nearly half include a preschool child or an older child or adult with a disability who needs the supervision of a caregiver. Establishing work requirements for the remaining six percent of households who are “work able” but not employed would require state and local housing agencies already facing funding shortfalls to establish cumbersome monitoring and enforcement systems for a very narrow segment of rental assistance recipients. This is neither cost-effective nor a solution to the very real issue of poverty impacting millions of families living in subsidized homes or the many millions more in need.

Work requirements don't work: they do not create the jobs with decent pay and opportunities needed to lift people out of poverty. Instead, imposing such requirements could cut struggling families off from the very housing stability and services that make it possible for them to find and maintain work.

To help struggling families earn more and get ahead, Secretary Carson should work to expand—not slash—investments in affordable homes, job training, education, childcare, and other policies to help families thrive. Research shows that HUD's voluntary programs, like Jobs Plus and Family Self Sufficiency, are far more effective and less onerous than work requirements. Under these programs, services and financial incentives help families increase their earnings without the risks and added costs. HUD's Section 3 regulation should be strengthened and enforced to promote job training and hiring among people receiving housing benefits.

HUD must reconsider its misguided and cruel proposals to increase rent burdens for millions of the lowest income and most vulnerable seniors, families and people with disabilities. While Secretary Carson may try to portray the proposals as increasing “self-sufficiency,” these proposals are more about punishing low income people than helping them.

Read more about the draft bill [here](#) and [here](#), and stay tuned for more information on how you can help defeat these harmful proposals.

Thanks, as always, for your advocacy,

Diane

Take Action

Sign On to Letter by COB Today Urging Congress to Pass a Disaster Relief Bill

Sign your organization on to a [letter](#) to members of Congress telling them to enact a robust disaster relief bill as soon as possible that includes basic safeguards and housing resources to help low income seniors, people with disabilities, families with children, veterans, people experiencing homelessness, and other vulnerable populations recover and rebuild after the 2017 hurricanes and wildfires. The deadline to [sign](#) the letter is today, February 5 by COB.

The letter calls on Congress to: amend the House-approved disaster relief bill to stand up the Disaster Housing Assistance Program (DHAP), a proven solution to the longer term housing needs of low income disaster survivors; to require the administration to collect and make public data to ensure that the recovery reaches all households; and to provide sufficient housing resources to ensure the severe shortage of affordable rental homes in disaster-impacted communities is not worsened. Further delay in providing these critical resources and safeguards will only make it more difficult for low income survivors to fully recover.

Click [here](#) to view the sign-on letter and [here](#) to sign the letter.

NLIHC leads the Disaster Housing Recovery Coalition (DHRC), a broad coalition of national, state, and local organizations that calls on Congress, FEMA, and HUD to ensure that the federal response to Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria, and the California wildfires is complete and equitable for everyone - especially families and individuals with the lowest incomes who are often the hardest hit by natural disasters and have the fewest resources to recover afterwards. In addition to signing the letter, please consider joining your organization to the DHRC.

For more information on this letter or on the DHRC, contact NLIHC Disaster Housing Recovery Coordinator Debra Susie at: dsusie@nlihc.org

Sign Letter to Protect and Expand the National Housing Trust Fund, Deadline February 7

The deadline to sign your organization onto a letter urging Congress to increase funding to the national Housing Trust Fund (HTF) is **Wednesday, February 7**. [Sign the letter today](#) telling Congress to expand the national HTF to at least \$3.5 billion annually in comprehensive housing finance reform legislation as part of a broad commitment to access and affordability in the housing market. Increased funding for the HTF is critically important to addressing homelessness and housing poverty in America.

The HTF is the first new federal housing resource in a generation exclusively targeted to help build and preserve housing affordable to people with the lowest incomes. The HTF is currently funded by a small assessment on Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac's annual book of business, but far greater resources are needed to meet the need. According to NLIHC's [The Gap: A Shortage of Affordable Homes](#) report, there are just 35 rental

homes affordable and available to every 100 extremely low income households in the U.S. As a result, 71% of these households pay more than half of their limited incomes on rent, forcing them to make impossible trade-offs between paying rent and buying groceries, seeing a doctor, or saving for college or an emergency. In the worst cases, they become homeless.

In 2014, Republicans and Democrats on the Senate Banking Committee voted to support housing finance reform legislation introduced by then-Senator Tim Johnson (D-SD) and Senator Mike Crapo (R-ID) that would have increased funding for the HTF to an estimated \$3.5 billion annually. This should be the starting point for any new legislation considered by Congress.

Members of the Senate Banking Committee are currently drafting housing finance reform legislation that limits funding for the HTF. Help us demonstrate the overwhelming support for this essential program by [signing your organization onto the letter by Wednesday, February 7.](#)

Thank you for your support of this critical program.

NLIHC 2018 Housing Policy Forum

New Multi-Sector Affordable Housing Campaign Debuts at NLIHC 2018 Housing Policy Forum, March 19-20

The [NLIHC 2018 Housing Policy Forum: Building the Movement](#), March 19-21 in Washington DC, will feature the official launch of a new national multi-sector affordable housing campaign. Learn more about this exciting new campaign and how to get involved at this year's Forum. The deadline to receive the early-bird registration rate for the Forum is February 19, and space at the Forum is quickly filling up, so [register today!](#)

After a year-long planning process and with the input from education, health, anti-poverty, faith-based, civil rights, child-welfare, and other organizations, NLIHC, the National Alliance to End Homelessness (the Alliance), the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP), Make Room, and Children's HealthWatch (CHW) initiated a dynamic, long-term, multi-sector campaign to meet the housing needs of the lowest income people in America. The campaign will mobilize powerful new constituencies beyond housing that are increasingly recognizing the impact that the inability to afford decent housing has on the wellbeing of the people they serve.

The campaign steering committee includes leaders from Children's Defense Fund, Community Catalyst, the Food Research & Action Center, NAACP, National Alliance on Mental Illness, the National Association of Community Health Centers, the National Education Association, and Unidos US. Representatives from these organizations will join leaders from NLIHC, the Alliance, CBPP, Make Room and CHW for the launch.

The Forum will provide a wide array of other opportunities for those committed to building the affordable housing movement to engage with advocates and practitioners, movement leaders, policy experts, researchers, government officials, and low income residents on the challenges and opportunities ahead and on strategies for achieving real solutions. The Forum will offer sessions and workshops on the threats and opportunities for affordable housing in 2018 and beyond; the state of fair housing on the 50th anniversary of the Fair Housing Act; the current political and legislative environment in the run-up to the 2018 elections; the keys to state, local, and resident-led organizing; making housing an issue with the media; and effective story-telling for affordable housing. The Forum will also explore mobilizing nonpartisan voter and candidate engagement; using dynamic research to change the story and influence policy solutions; ensuring housing protections for LGBTQ individuals; housing the formerly incarcerated; and others. There will also be opportunities to engage with

leaders and staff in Congress on affordable housing challenges, solutions and priorities, and there will be a special session for low income residents on the morning of March 19.

Confirmed and invited speakers and panelists at the Forum include:

- U.S. Senator Cory Booker (D-NJ) (Invited)
- Charlie Cook, editor and publisher of *The Cook Political Report*
- Mark Horvath, founder, *Invisible People*
- Kriston Capps, staff writer, *CityLab*
- Laura Kusisto, reporter, *Wall Street Journal*
- Danica Roem, state delegate (D-VA) (Invited)
- Richard Rothstein, author of the *The Color of Law*
- James A.A. Cadogan, director, NAACP Legal Defense Fund Thurgood Marshall Institute
- Don Chen, director of equitable development, Ford Foundation
- Sheila Crowley, former NLIHC president and CEO
- Megan Sandel, MD MPH, principal investigator, Children’s Health Watch
- Joseph Lawler, economics reporter, *Washington Examiner*
- Gregory Lewis, CEO, True Colors Fund

[Register for the 2018 NLIHC Housing Policy Forum Today!](#)

Disaster Housing Recovery

Governors, Senators Call for Urgent Action on Disaster Recovery

The governors of Texas, California, Florida and Puerto Rico called on Congress to pass an additional disaster supplemental bill as soon as possible, and Senators Marco Rubio (R-FL) and Bill Nelson (D-FL) urged additional actions by FEMA and Puerto Rico to address the island’s housing recovery needs.

Governors Greg Abbott (TX), Jerry Brown (CA), Ricardo Rosselló (PR), and Rick Scott (FL) wrote a [letter](#) on January 24 to congressional majority and minority leadership urging them to pass an additional disaster relief funding bill post-haste. The letter asserts that the “delay [of additional federal assistance] only exacerbates ongoing uncertainty in devastated areas.”

Senator Rubio sent a [letter](#) on January 25 to Puerto Rico Governor Ricardo Rosselló advising him to request participation in FEMA’s Direct Lease program. FEMA uses the Direct Lease program to provide temporary housing by encouraging landlords to participate in the program, then paying for rent and utilities. The program requires a formal request from the governor to be implemented. Senator Rubio’s letter states that Florida’s “state and local governments are ready and willing to assist” but need additional federal resources to help displaced Puerto Rican families.

Senators Rubio and Nelson sent a [letter](#) on January 26 to FEMA Administrator Brock Long calling on him to coordinate with HUD to implement affordable, long-term housing solutions for Floridians and Puerto Ricans displaced by last year’s hurricanes. “HUD provides a variety of disaster-related resources and has significant experience with addressing post-disaster housing issues,” the senators stated. “Stable, long-term housing is essential for families to regain normalcy. In recognizing this, we urge you to coordinate with HUD and employ their expertise in addressing long-term housing solutions.”

FEMA Reverses Decision to End Water and Food Assistance to Puerto Rico

Although a third of Puerto Rico residents still lack electricity and many have no running water, FEMA announced on January 30 that it would abruptly end the distribution of emergency food and potable water on January 31. The [agency reversed its decision](#) the following afternoon, following vigorous protests by members of Congress and officials in Puerto Rico. FEMA supported its original decision to end emergency water and food distribution by citing internal estimates that only 1% of islanders were still in need. In the town of Morovis, however, Mayor Carmen Maldonado reported that a third of the town's residents still need and receive FEMA rations. The government of Puerto Rico released a statement that it was unaware FEMA planned to end the distribution of food and water. Although FEMA agreed to continue helping the Puerto Rican government distribute food and water, the agency does not plan to continue new shipments of emergency rations. If current supplies run out, FEMA will consider purchasing more, although a spokesperson maintained the current stockpile would be sufficient.

Senator Bill Nelson (D-FL) [stated](#) on the Senate floor on January 30 that he was “absolutely shocked” by FEMA’s decision, which he called “unconscionable and a travesty.” He called on the administration to reverse the decision, stating, “FEMA needs to continue to provide food and water to the island until, at the very least, all of the island has access to potable water and electricity.” He and fellow Florida Senator Marco Rubio (R) also urged the Senate to pass much-needed disaster aid, which the House passed in December 2017. Other members of Congress, including [Representative Nydia Velazquez](#) (D-NY) and [Senator Bernie Sanders](#) (I-VT), also denounced FEMA’s decision.

HUD Awards \$1.5 Billion to Puerto Rico and \$243 Million to the Virgin Islands for Hurricane Recovery

HUD awarded more than [\\$1.5 billion](#) to Puerto Rico and [\\$243 million](#) to the U.S. Virgin Islands for long-term disaster recovery through the Community Development Block Grant – Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) program. These funds are from the first disaster aid supplemental passed as part of the September 8, 2017 continuing resolution. The act appropriated \$7.4 billion in CDBG-DR to help areas affected by major disasters in calendar year 2017. Texas, Florida, and now Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands are still waiting for HUD to publish a *Federal Register* notice providing guidance regarding use of these funds. CDBG-DR grants can fund housing redevelopment, economic revitalization, and infrastructure repair. Once HUD issues the guidance, Texas, Florida, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands must draft for public review and comment their action plans detailing how a majority of their funds (typically 80%) will be awarded for specific activities to address recovery needs in their “most impacted and distressed” areas.

Additional Updates on Disaster Housing Recovery – February 5

The following is a review of additional housing recovery developments related to Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria, and the California wildfires since last week’s *Memo to Members and Partners* (for the article in last week’s *Memo*, see [1/29](#)). NLIHC also posts this information at our [On the Home Front](#) blog.

General Updates

The “Small Business Access to Capital After a Natural Disaster Act” ([HR 4792](#)) passed the House by voice vote on January 29. The bill expands existing provisions for small businesses in the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 to provide additional resources for small businesses affected by natural disasters. “FEMA estimates that nearly 40 percent of small businesses never reopen after a disaster,” stated Representative Nydia Velazquez (D-NY),

the sponsor of the bill. “Therefore, developing strategies to drive private capital to a community’s small business is one of the most efficient uses of private sector capital and one of the most effective ways we in the federal government can help an area recover.”

Hurricane Maria

FEMA

Private nonprofit houses of worship in the U.S. Virgin Islands can apply for Public Assistance (PA) through [February 16](#). FEMA changed the policy regarding PA eligibility on January 2, and the deadline has been extended to allow these organizations to apply.

Local Perspectives

Puerto Rico officials estimate the damage wrought by Hurricane Maria will prevent them from paying down any of their debt for the next [five years](#). The Puerto Rico government currently owes more than \$70 billion.

Hurricane Irma

Local Perspectives

Florida Governor Rick Scott extended Executive Order 17-259 on January 25 for all Florida counties. This executive order ensures the state can provide resources and assistance for families displaced by Hurricane Maria.

Private nonprofit houses of worship in Florida can apply for Public Assistance (PA) through [February 15](#).

Private non-profit houses of worship in Georgia can apply for FEMA Public Assistance (PA) to cover expenses incurred from Hurricane Irma through [March 2](#).

Hurricane Harvey

Local Perspective

The U.S. Economic Development Association, the International Economic Development Council, and the Texas A&M Engineering Extension Service are partnering together to [provide economic development assistance](#) to communities impacted by Hurricane Harvey. Volunteer experts with experience in disaster recovery provide support to local governments on the recovery process.

A [PBS News Hour special](#) highlights the housing struggles families continue to face following Hurricane Harvey. Thousands of Texans remain in temporary housing while they seek more permanent housing solutions. Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner estimates approximately 4,300 Houstonians are still living in hotels while they wait for longer-term FEMA assistance.

Administration

President’s State of the Union Fails to Address Need for Affordable Housing

President Trump gave on January 20 his first State of the Union address. Diane Yentel, president and CEO of the National Low Income Housing Coalition, issued a statement in response stating, “In his State of the Union Address, President Donald Trump failed to address the urgent need in America for more decent, safe, affordable homes for the lowest income seniors, people with disabilities, veterans, low-wage working families, and victims of recent disasters.”

“By noting his intent to ‘lift our citizens from welfare to work, from dependence to independence, and from poverty to prosperity,’” Ms. Yentel stated, “the president previewed the administration’s planned efforts to cut federal housing benefits to low income families by imposing arbitrary work requirements and other ineffective and costly measures. One of the biggest barriers to economic prosperity for the lowest income families is a lack of decent, accessible and affordable homes. Yet the Administration will soon propose legislation to cut housing assistance for low income residents by changing rent structures and imposing new punitive requirements. The president’s pending proposals are more about punishing low income people than helping them.”

“These proposals could leave even more low income people without a stable home, making it harder for them to climb the economic ladder and live with dignity,” Ms. Yentel continued. “Work requirements do not create the jobs and opportunities needed to lift families out of poverty, but instead could cut struggling families off from the very housing stability and services that make it possible for them to find and maintain jobs. If the president is serious about helping lift struggling families out of poverty, he should focus on expanding – not slashing - investments in affordable homes, as well as increased wages, job training, education, and childcare.”

Ms. Yentel also commented on the president’s failure to outline his plan to address the long-term housing needs of low income survivors of recent disasters, his exclusion of affordable housing from his infrastructure proposal, and the need for Congress to lift spending caps equally for defense and domestic priorities, including affordable housing and community development.

Read Ms. Yentel’s full statement on the State of the Union Address at: <http://bit.ly/2GCGB2z>

Congress

Appropriations Chairman Frelinghuysen to Retire after Term Ends

Representative Rodney Frelinghuysen (R-NJ), chair of the House Appropriations Committee, announced on January 29 that he will not seek reelection. Mr. Frelinghuysen served twelve terms in the House of Representatives but only one full year leading the Appropriations Committee, which controls federal spending.

Whichever party controls the House following the 2018 elections will choose a new chair of the Appropriations Committee. Republican Representatives Robert Alderholt (R-AL), Kay Granger (R-TX), and Tom Cole (R-OK) have already indicated they would seek the position. If Democrats were to take control, the position would likely go to Nita Lowey (D-NY), the current ranking member.

Read Representative Frelinghuysen’s statement at: <http://bit.ly/2BHJI5C>

Budget & Appropriations

Current Continuing Resolution Is Set to Expire February 8

Congress still has not reached a deal on how to fund the federal government for FY18, creating the possibility of a government shutdown when the current stopgap funding measure, known as a continuing resolution (CR), expires on February 8. A CR carries forward funding levels from the previous year. Lawmakers have now passed several CRs for FY18, as they continue to negotiate a final deal to lift mandatory caps to increase spending on discretionary programs and fund the government for the rest of the fiscal year. Multiple Republican sources indicate the House could vote as early as Tuesday, February 6, on a stopgap bill to fund the government through March 22.

Republican leaders have proposed raising the FY18 cap on discretionary spending by \$143 billion, a 13% increase over current spending limits. Democrats, however, continue to demand that any deal maintain parity between defense and nondefense spending. The deal proposed by Republicans would provide an additional \$80 billion for defense spending, while increasing non-defense discretionary spending by \$63 billion. The proposal calls for allowing similar increases in FY19. Another Republican proposal was to increase funding for non-defense programs while earmarking some of the increased funds for transportation infrastructure, reducing the amount of money available for other programs.

Even if lawmakers are able to reach a deal before the current CR expires, Congress will likely have to pass another CR to give appropriators time to finalize the 12 annual spending bills—including those that fund affordable housing and community development programs—based on the increased funding levels set by the deal. These bills would likely be combined to form an omnibus spending package.

It is unclear if Congress will be able reach agreements on providing emergency aid for areas impacted by recent disasters or on a fix for young undocumented immigrants enrolled in the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program in order to attach them to a CR. During the last CR negotiations, Democratic leaders demanded these issues be addressed but backed off after the government was shut down for three days.

CHCDF Calls for Affordable Housing in Infrastructure Plan

The Campaign for Housing and Community Development Funding (CHCDF) released a statement following President Donald Trump’s State of the Union Address urging him and Congress to include federal investments for affordable rental homes in any upcoming infrastructure plan. The president unveiled his infrastructure proposal during the address but missed the opportunity to address affordable housing for people with the lowest incomes, one of the greatest barriers to America’s economic growth. CHCDF’s report [*A Place to Call Home*](#) found that “investing in affordable housing infrastructure – including resources targeted to production, preservation, and rental assistance – bolsters productivity and economic growth, supports local job creation and increased incomes, and creates inclusive communities.” The president’s proposed investments in transportation and infrastructure will fall short without increased access to affordable rental housing.

“The connection between affordable rental homes and infrastructure is clear: like roads and bridges, affordable homes are a long-term asset that helps communities and the lowest income families thrive. Targeted rental housing investments should be included in any infrastructure package,” stated Diane Yentel, president and CEO of NLIHC.

“Housing is fundamental to our national infrastructure and must be part of any infrastructure plan. Opportunity for Americans begins with affordable, well-designed homes in thriving communities – a must to promote equitable outcomes for working families and reach our full potential as a nation,” said Terri Ludwig, president and CEO of Enterprise Community Partners, Inc.

“Affordable housing investment is an essential piece of our country’s infrastructure strategy. When communities don’t have adequate affordable housing for their workforce, families suffer. Investment in affordable housing improves economic growth, promotes economic mobility and supports job creation and increased incomes. Any infrastructure package needs to include a robust affordable housing component to allow for increased economic impact,” stated Laura DeMaria, executive director of the National Association for County Community and Economic Development.

“Our communities are woven together by the homes within them. Any infrastructure plan would be incomplete without funding to expand the supply of homes affordable to low income people, including the millions of older

adults forced to choose today between paying for medicine, rent, and food because of the lack of affordable homes,” stated Katie Smith Sloan, president and CEO, LeadingAge.

“The philanthropic community is and will continue to engage with public partners to invest in safe, accessible, and affordable housing in communities around the country. Philanthropy recognizes and understands the critical need to invest in affordable housing infrastructure, but cannot fill this need alone. In order to move individuals and families out of homelessness and into housing, it is imperative that robust public funds are available for private dollars to leverage,” said Amanda Andere, CEO of Funders Together to End Homelessness.

“Any national infrastructure plan should include an investment in preserving and improving safe, affordable housing, which is fundamental to helping families thrive and access opportunity,” said Ellen Lurie Hoffman, federal policy director of the National Housing Trust. “A federal commitment to affordable housing is essential to leverage private investment, ensuring that Americans can access rental housing that is affordable and sustainable over time.”

Read CHCDF’s full statement on Mr. Trump’s State of the Union Address at: <http://bit.ly/2s4GqKv>

HUD

White House Nominates Seth Daniel Appleton to Head HUD Policy Development and Research

President Donald Trump [announced](#) his intention to nominate Seth Daniel Appleton to be HUD assistant secretary for Policy Development and Research (PD&R). Mr. Appleton currently serves as acting assistant secretary and general deputy assistant secretary at HUD’s Office of Congressional and Intergovernmental Relations. He previously served as a senior staff member in the U.S. House of Representatives, most recently as chief of staff for Representative Blaine Luetkemeyer (R-MO) from 2009 to 2017. During his tenure in the House, Mr. Appleton focused on policy issues related to housing, financial services, small business, and agriculture, among other subjects. He earned a B.A. in history from Stanford University.

Research

Family Self-Sufficiency Program Shows Promising Results

A brief released by Compass Working Capital and Preservation of Affordable Housing (POAH), *Promoting Economic Mobility in Multifamily Housing: Initial Outcomes from Family Self-Sufficiency Programs*, highlights positive outcomes of Compass’s Family Self-Sufficient (FSS) program. Enrollees in the Compass FSS program saw significant increases in their annual earnings and credit scores and reductions in their debt obligations.

Congress created the FSS Program in 1990 to help housing assistance recipients increase their incomes and build their savings. Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) recipients contribute 30% of their income toward rent and utilities, with the voucher paying the remaining housing costs up to the public housing agency’s payment standard. Typically, as recipients’ incomes rise, so do the rents they must pay. The FSS Program allows households whose incomes increase to place their additional rent contributions in a savings account for future use. The savings are accumulated and held in an account over a five-year period. If the tenant does not receive cash assistance and remains employed for one year, he or she can use these savings toward their financial goals. In 2014, Congress extended the FSS program to Section 8 Project Based Rental Assistance (PBRA) properties,

giving property owners the option to develop an FSS program. Compass Working Capital's FSS program implemented in partnership with POAH includes financial education and coaching.

The brief highlights the changes in employment, earnings, and debt since participants' enrollment in the Compass-POAH FSS program. The percent of participants with full-time employment increased from 22% to 36%; the unemployment rate declined from 39% to 27%; average annual earned income increased from \$12,211 to \$17,722; average FICO credit score increased from 587 to 616; and the percent of participants with debt in collection declined from 69% to 59%.

A larger study by Abt Associates of a Compass-FSS program with public housing agencies in Massachusetts found similar results. The study compared Compass-FSS participants to non-participants. Compass-FSS participants had an average earnings increase of \$6,305 more than if they had not participated in FSS and an average bad-debt decrease of \$764 less than if they had not participated in the program. The share of FSS participants with bad debt decreased from 65% to 54%, while the share of non-participants with bad debt increased from 61% to 66%.

Compass and POAH recommend Congress make the FSS permanent for PBRA properties rather than extending authorizations for the program through annual appropriations. Permanent authorization would encourage more owners to opt in. The report also recommends Congress increase the amount of funding appropriated for FSS coordinators in public housing and Section 8 PBRA programs, allowing them to serve more households.

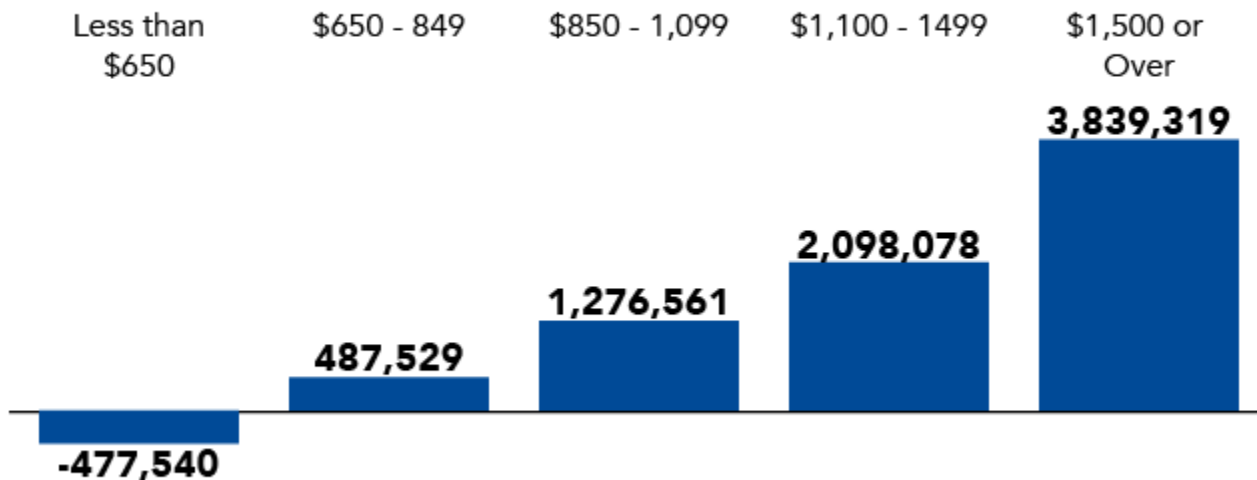
Promoting Economic Mobility in Multifamily Housing: Initial Outcomes from Family Self-Sufficiency Programs is available at: <http://bit.ly/2ndscB1>

Abt Associates' *Evaluation of the Compass Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Programs Administered in Partnership with Public Housing Agencies in Lynn and Cambridge, Massachusetts* is available at: <http://bit.ly/2xt8Yyh>

Fact of the Week

Number of Low-Cost Rental Homes Declined while High-Cost Rentals Surged from 2006 to 2016

Change in Rental Units by Monthly Rent, 2006-2016



Source: Harvard Joint Center for Housing Studies, *America's Rental Housing 2017*, www.jchs.harvard.edu. All rights reserved. Interactive chart for U.S. and metro areas available at: http://www.jchs.harvard.edu/ARH_2017_change_in_rental_units

Source: Harvard Joint Center for Housing Studies, *America's Rental Housing 2017*, www.jchs.harvard.edu. All rights reserved.

An interactive chart for U.S. and metro areas is available at: <http://bit.ly/2DVSELA>

From the Field

Texas Motor Vehicle Registrants May Now Contribute to New Ending Homelessness Fund

The Texas State Legislature passed and Governor Greg Abbott (R) signed into law on September 1, 2017 the creation of a statewide Ending Homelessness Fund, which allows motor vehicle registrants the option of contributing to the new fund. The fund, to be administered by the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA), will provide grants to counties and municipalities to combat homelessness.

As of January 1, 2018, Texans may now opt to contribute any amount they wish to the Ending Homelessness Fund when they submit a new, or renew an existing, motor vehicle registration online or in-person at county tax assessor-collector offices, substations, and participating subcontractor locations, including some grocery stores, across the state.

Contributions to the fund will help increase the number and improve the quality of emergency shelters, prevent families and individuals from experiencing homelessness, encourage self-sufficiency among people experiencing homelessness, and assist homeless individuals and families secure stable housing.

Texas Homeless Network (THN), an NLIHC state partner, advocated for the creation of the Ending Homelessness Fund, and THN President and CEO Eric Samuels testified for it before the Texas State Senate Transportation Committee. THN will continue its advocacy work on the Ending Homelessness Fund in 2018 by participating in roundtable discussions facilitated by TDHCA to determine the priorities the agency should adopt as it creates and implements rules for use of the fund. The act requires TDHCA to adopt rules governing applications for grants and the issuance of those grants.

“The effects of homelessness can have wide-ranging consequences, both on families and communities,” said Tim Irvine, TDHCA executive director. “The donations collected through the Ending Homelessness Fund will help assist in efforts to counter those effects, help build stronger community engagement and outreach, and deliver crucial services and delivery of aid to those most in need.”

Data from HUD’s most recent point-in-time count estimate that more than 23,000 Texans are considered homeless, including approximately 7,000 living on the streets and more than 16,000 living in shelters and transitional housing. Data from NLIHC’s most recent [The Gap: A Shortage of Affordable Homes](#) report indicate that Texas has only 29 affordable and available rental homes for every 100 of the state’s 878,000 extremely low income renter households—those living below the federal poverty level or 30% of their area median income.

“I meet people from all over the state who share our compassion for those experiencing homelessness, but who aren't sure how to help—how they can fit into supporting solutions to homelessness, because of their limited time or resources,” said Mr. Samuels. “This fund allows concerned fellow Texans an opportunity to contribute in a tangible way and to join us in this effort to end homelessness in Texas.”

For more information, contact Eric Samuels at: eric@thn.org

Our Homes, Our Voices Week of Action

Make Your Voice Heard During the #OurHomesOurVoices Housing Week of Action, May 1-8

Sign up and begin planning today to participate in the 2018 [Our Homes, Our Voices](#) National Housing Week of Action, May 1-8. Federal investments in proven affordable housing solutions [benefit us all](#). But at a time when we should be *increasing* those investments, President Donald Trump will again propose slashing vital HUD and USDA resources that house low income people and revitalize distressed communities. It’s time to mobilize for affordable homes!

Last year, NLIHC – together with our members, national and state partners, mayors, other elected officials, and others – worked with advocates nationwide to organize the *Our Homes, Our Voices* National Housing Week of Action. Groups across the country – from Miami, Florida to Palmer, Alaska and beyond – hosted more than 60 rallies, press conferences, letter-writing campaigns, and other events to defeat harmful funding cuts and let members of Congress know why affordable housing matters to our communities.

Join us from May 1-8 for [Our Homes, Our Voices](#), a National Housing Week of Action.

Building on last year’s success, we will hold this year’s week of action from **May 1-8**. Together we will bring more attention to the severe shortage of homes affordable to the lowest income people and urge increased investments in solutions.

You can start planning an event in your community for the Housing Week of Action by going to www.ourhomes-ourvoices.org. There you will find guides for how to plan different types of activities and

sample materials and content for you to use, including talking points, tweets, op-eds, press releases, social media images and posters. When you've planned an event, we'll feature it on the website, directing supporters to you and inspiring others to plan activities.

NLIHC's [2018 Housing Policy Forum: Building the Movement](#) will also help you prepare. In addition to the latest updates on federal housing policy, we'll offer several panels and workshops on effective state and local organizing strategies and share tools and ideas to help you plan a successful event for this year's *Our Homes, Our Voices* Housing Week of Action.

The need for affordable housing in communities across the country is greater than ever, while threats to funding for programs that make affordable housing possible are more severe than they have been in decades.

It's time to act - to raise our voices not only to protect vital affordable housing programs, but to expand them so that everyone, especially those with the lowest incomes, has an affordable place to call home.

[Join us!](#)

Event

Housing First Partners Conference Early Bird Registration Ends February 9

The early-bird registration rate for the "Housing First Partners Conference 2018: Assuring Program Integrity in a Changing Environment" April 9-12 in Denver, CO, ends February 9. There will be a pre-conference program offering a number of dynamic institutes, and the conference itself will provide an information-packed three-days of workshops, plenaries, TED-style talks, interviews and inspiring presentations from providers, researchers, policy makers and those with lived experience – all of whom are passionately engaged in ending chronic homelessness. Diane Yentel, NLIHC President and CEO, will give a keynote address at the conference.

View the schedule-at-a-glance, pre-conference institute information, and a list of conference workshops at: <http://bit.ly/2BBE5KU>

Book your hotel room at: <http://bit.ly/2DIMj1g>

A limited number of discounted registrations for service providers are available, intended specifically for front-line workers in direct service agencies. To apply, contact Paula Sasser to receive an application:

Paula.Sasser@HorizonMeetings.com

For more information about Housing First Partners Conference 2018, visit: <http://bit.ly/2w7XD6Q>

NLIHC in the News

NLIHC in the News for the Week of January 28

The following are some of the news stories that NLIHC contributed to during the week of January 28:

- "HUD May Push New Work Requirements for Public Housing Residents," *CityLab*, February 2 at: <http://bit.ly/2DY3v74>

- “The Poverty on Disney’s Doorstep,” *The American Prospect*, February 2 at: <http://bit.ly/2EBgM2z>
 - “Draft Legislation Suggests Trump Administration Weighing Work Requirements And Rent Increases For Subsidized Housing,” *The Intercept*, February 1 at: <http://bit.ly/2nDlyV4>
 - “Tweet showing how hard it is to afford housing on minimum wage goes viral—there’s just one problem,” *CNBC*, January 26 at: <http://cnb.cx/2BC1ck7>
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NLIHC News

Lisa Hasegawa to be Honored at NLIHC 2018 Housing Leadership Awards Reception, March 20

Lisa Hasegawa, former executive director of the National Coalition for Asian and Pacific American Community Development (National CAPACD) and NLIHC board member, will receive the 2018 Cushing Niles Dolbeare Lifetime Service Award at [NLIHC’s annual Housing Leadership Awards Reception](#) taking place in Washington DC on March 20. Make a [donation](#) in Ms. Hasegawa’s honor and/or [register to attend](#) the event today.

The Cushing Niles Dolbeare Lifetime Service Award is named after NLIHC’s founder. One of the leading experts on federal housing policy and the housing circumstances of low income people, Ms. Dolbeare was widely known as the “godmother” of the affordable housing advocacy movement.

As executive director of National CAPACD for 15 years, Lisa Hasegawa led national efforts to bring visibility to low income Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) communities and worked in coalition with other civil rights organizations and advocates for people who are poor. She often points out that inclusion of AAPIs in the narrative of who is poor pushes back on attempts to use Asian Americans as a wedge to divide communities of color, or as justification that racism and white supremacy no longer exists. Prior to National CAPACD, she was the community liaison of the White House Initiative on AAPIs and worked to ensure federal agencies had adequate data and responded to needs in diverse low-income AAPI communities. In 2017 Lisa was named one of UCLA’s activists in residence at the Institute for Inequality and Democracy and the Asian American Studies Center. She currently is a principal at Fireflower Partners. For her entire career, Lisa has worked at the intersections of civil and human rights, affordable housing and public health, and community development and organizing.

The other 2018 honorees are Matthew Desmond, MacArthur Genius awardee and author of the Pulitzer Prize-winning book *Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City*, who will receive the Sheila Crowley Housing Justice Award, and U.S. Senator Susan Collins (R-ME), who will receive the Edward Brooke Housing Leadership award.

Please make a Leadership Award Reception sponsorship [donation](#) honoring these leaders and supporting NLIHC’s mission of promoting socially just public policy to ensure the lowest income people in America have decent, affordable homes. To register for the 2018 Leadership Reception at which Ms. Hasegawa, Dr. Desmond, and Ms. Collins will be recognized, contact Christina Sin at csin@nlihc.org or register [online](#) (a separate ticket from the NLIHC Housing Policy Forum, taking place the same week, is required to attend the reception).

NLIHC Seeks Housing Campaign Coordinator

NLIHC is accepting applications for a National Multisector Campaign Coordinator to support the implementation of a long-term multisector affordable housing campaign.

Background: After a year-long planning process and with the input from education, health, children's, anti-poverty, faith-based, and civil rights organizations, NLIHC, the National Alliance to End Homelessness, the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, Make Room, and Children's HealthWatch launched a dynamic, long-term, multi-sector Campaign to meet the housing needs of the lowest income people in America.

This is a critical moment in federal housing policy. Support for addressing rental affordability has gained momentum over the past several years. Potentially powerful new constituencies - in the health care, education, veterans, aging, child welfare, child poverty, faith, and other communities - are recognizing the impact the inability to afford decent housing has on the wellbeing of the people they serve. At the same time, there are unprecedented threats to federal housing assistance.

In the face of these opportunities and challenges, the multisector housing campaign will strive to address the entrenched shortage of housing affordable for the lowest income people. Strengthened and expanded coalitions nationally and in priority states will pursue a coordinated strategy to educate policymakers, the media, and the public about the problem and its practical solutions and the impact the solutions will have on the quality of life not only of low income people, but of the country more broadly.

The Campaign will deploy policy analysis and development, communications, and informing to impact opinion leaders and policymakers. It will be staffed and operated out of NLIHC. The Campaign's steering committee includes leaders in education, health, civil rights, poverty alleviation, children's issues, faith communities, disability rights, and other others. The goals of the Campaign are to advance federal policy solutions that:

1. *Fill the gap between rents and incomes* for the most vulnerable households through a variety of rental assistance strategies.
2. *Prevent destabilizing housing crises* through the creation of flexible short-term tools for low income homeowners and renters.
3. *Create more housing affordable to the lowest income people* through deeply income-targeted production programs like the national Housing Trust Fund.
4. *Defend against funding cuts and harmful policy changes* in existing low income housing programs.

A key part of the Campaign will be to develop and nurture an infrastructure of state partners that promotes the Campaign's federal substantive objectives. Seven state-based organizations have received grants to enable them to build broad and diverse state-based coalitions. These coalitions will lead state-based efforts supportive of the Campaign, including effective communications and engagement activities. The efforts by the initial seven grantees will serve as models that can be replicated in other states as additional funding becomes available. The work of the state partners will be supported by the national Campaign, with a significant role played by the Campaign Coordinator.

The Job Description: The Campaign Coordinator will report to the Campaign Director. S/he will have the following responsibilities:

- Support the Campaign Director in building and maintaining a cooperative, productive coalition structure, including close coordination with the Campaign's partners, the Campaign Steering Committee, and a larger network of cooperating organizations;
- Support the Campaign director in carrying out all aspects of the Campaign plan, including helping to develop and implement effective communications, outreach and advocacy plans;

- Working closely with the NLIHC field team, provide and administer grants to state partners and ensure effective partner grants management: ensure grantees are carrying out the terms of their grants and are effectively and appropriately using the grants provided to achieve intended outcomes;
- Ensure the effective integration of a state-based Campaign efforts into national efforts;
- Ensure that state-based coalitions in grant-receiving states have the materials, tools, and other supports needed to function as effectively as possible;
- Organize webinars and other training and technical assistance for key coalition members engaged in the campaign in all states;
- In partnership with NLIHC’s field team, stay in close contact with key organizational leaders in grant-receiving and other states to ensure that the Campaign and state efforts are best synchronized;
- Review plans and reports about state coalition efforts in grant-receiving states to determine ongoing effectiveness;
- Develop and implement a plan to ensure that state and local leaders are effectively engaged with and apprised of Campaign-related developments;
- Contribute to periodic reports to the Campaign’s partners, Steering Committee members, donors, and relevant others about the Campaign’s progress; and
- Other duties as assigned.

Qualifications for the Job: To receive serious consideration for this position, an applicant should have the following attributes and background:

- A bachelor’s degree (master’s degree preferred).
- A minimum of five years previous experience working in, coordinating, or leading efforts on one or more complex, multi-faceted projects or campaigns;
- A demonstrated, clear commitment to the alleviation of poverty (affordable housing experience a plus);
- Experience successfully building partnerships among organizations;
- Demonstrated excellence in organizational skills;
- Excellent communications skills, both orally and in writing;
- Experience in grant management and in reporting to donors, a plus; and
- An ability to work in a diverse, fast-paced environment.

Compensation and Benefits: An equal opportunity, affirmative action employer, NLIHC offers a competitive salary and benefits package. This is a full-time position located in Washington, DC.

Status: Full-time (exempt)

Reports To: Multisector Housing Campaign Director

Job Application Process: Candidates for this position should *send a cover letter, resume, and two writing samples* to: Paul Kealey, Chief Operating Officer, NLIHC, 1000 Vermont Avenue, N.W., Suite 500, Washington, D.C. 20005 at pkealey@nlihc.org. The cover letter should describe the candidate’s interest in, and relevant experiences for, the position, and it should include salary requirements and the names and contact information for at least three people serving as candidate references. (NLIHC will not contact references before consulting with the candidate.)

Where to Find Us – February 5

NLIHC President and CEO Diane Yentel and other NLIHC staff will be speaking at the following events in the coming months:

- [CHAPA Federal Forum On Affordable Housing & Community Development](#), Boston, MA on February 13, 2018
 - [2018 Illinois Governor's Conference on Affordable Housing](#), Chicago, IL, February 21-22, 2018
 - [NCSHA Legislative Conference](#), Washington, DC on March 7
 - [Housing First Partners Conference 2018](#), Denver, CO, April 10 -12, 2018
 - [2018 Building Michigan Communities Conference](#), Lansing, MI, April 30 to May 2
 - [2018 Denver Housing Summit](#), Denver, CO on May 24
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NLIHC Staff

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Andrew Aurand, Vice President for Research, x245
Victoria Bourret, Housing Advocacy Organizer, x244
Josephine Clarke, Executive Assistant, x226
Dan Emmanuel, Research Analyst, x316
Ellen Errico, Creative Services Manager, x246
Jared Gaby-Biegel, Research Intern, x249
Ed Gramlich, Senior Advisor, x314
Paul Kealey, Chief Operating Officer, x232
Emma Kerr, Research Intern, x229
Joseph Lindstrom, Manager, Field Organizing, x222
Lisa Marlow, Communications Specialist, x239
Lauren McMahon, Graphic Design and Communications Intern, x252
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Khara Norris, Director of Administration, x242
James Saucedo, Housing Advocacy Organizer, x233
Christina Sin, Development Coordinator, x234
Debra Susie, Disaster Housing Recovery Coordinator, x227
Elayne Weiss, Senior Housing Policy Analyst, x243
Renee Willis, Vice President for Field and Communications, x247
Diane Yentel, President and CEO, x228