NATIONAL LOW INCOME HOUSING COALITION

Memo TO Members

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NLIHC IN THE NEWS

POINT OF VIEW

Impossible – *By Diane Yentel, NLIHC President and CEO*

For years the mortgage interest deduction (MID) was considered an untouchable third rail program. Powerful opponents with deep pockets created a sturdy mythology around the program's importance: it was created to help people realize the American dream of homeownership (it wasn't); it incentivizes homeownership (it doesn't); it is targeted to those who need it (it isn't); it is a reasonable use of $75 billion in federal resources annually (it's not).

When NLIHC Founder Cushing Dolbeare first called for the MID's reform over 40 years ago, she was told such reform would never happen – "it's impossible." In our last comprehensive tax reform law over thirty years ago, that was true. Cushing, it turned out, was way ahead of her time; the tax reform law *increased* the MID benefit.

Since then, the same refrain has been echoed to all who urged reform. It's impossible: the opponents are too powerful, their endorsements and contributions to policymakers too effective, the belief among low and middle income homeowners that they benefit from the MID, even when they don't, too cemented. But proponents of MID reform persisted. Little by little, leaders like Sheila Crowley, Ron Terwilliger, Mark Calabria, Stan Humphries, Matt Desmond, and numerous economists and tax policy experts from across the political spectrum have chipped away at the mythology and revealed the MID for what it is: an expensive, inefficient, and poorly targeted tax expenditure.

These individuals' efforts to expose the MID's flaws are working. Today, with the possibility of comprehensive tax reform higher than it has been in several decades, key Republicans in the Administration, in Congressional leadership, and on the tax-writing House Ways and Means Committee are actively considering a number of direct and indirect changes to the MID.

Still, that stubborn refrain of "impossible" continues, now shifted to the impossibility of retaining the savings achieved through MID reform to make housing affordable to the lowest income people. Certainly, if we convince ourselves of that refrain, we can easily create a self-fulfilling prophecy and very unfortunately be right.

It's true that some Republicans are pursuing changes to the MID both out of a recognition of the deduction's policy flaws and, as importantly in their view, to utilize the savings to pay for lowered individual and corporate tax rates. But with the housing crisis having reached new heights, and with the poorest families suffering its harshest impacts, we cannot allow these housing dollars to be used to benefit corporations. Housing dollars must stay in housing programs and be directed to solutions that assist the lowest income people with the greatest need.

We've relaunched the United for Homes campaign with a new website, new materials and new messaging, all designed to seize this moment to redirect tens of billions of dollars towards ending homelessness and housing poverty in America once and for all. Our proposal: 1) Lower the cap on the amount of mortgage on which you can claim tax relief from $1 million to $500,000, impacting fewer than 6% of mortgage holders nationwide, mostly in New York and California; and 2) change the deduction to a credit, providing a new tax break to 15 million lower income homeowners and a deeper tax cut to another 10 million homeowners.
These two changes together would save $241 billion over ten years, to be reinvested into affordable rental housing solutions like the national Housing Trust Fund, a renters' tax credit, or other rental assistance programs for the lowest income people.

This is a reasonable, bipartisan solution. Conservatives who want to see a simpler tax code can support reforms that do just that, while putting more money back in the hands of their red-state constituents: about half of all spending through the mortgage interest deduction benefits a small number of high-income households in blue states. Progressives who are committed to addressing growing income inequality and racial inequities can support reforms that make the mortgage interest deduction fairer for more families. And policy makers from both sides of the aisle can agree that scarce federal resources should be targeted towards those with the greatest need: people experiencing homelessness, struggling low income renters, and low income homeowners.

Most days at least one person tells me this is impossible. I remind them of what the great Nelson Mandela said: "It always seems impossible, until it's done." There is no doubt we still have a steep hill to climb to achieve our goal. But many of you spend your days working to end homelessness and housing poverty, to reverse decades of residential segregation, and to revitalize deeply distressed communities – it's not like challenging goals have deterred us before!

Join us, and let's get it done! www.unitedforhomes.org

TAKE ACTION

Urge Congress to Protect Critical Affordable Housing and Transportation Funding

Funding for affordable housing, community development, and transportation programs is threatened. Contact Congress today and tell them to protect the federal spending needed to ensure families and communities can thrive. And sign your organization onto a letter from advocates calling on Congress to protect vital programs.

In late January 2017, news broke that the Trump Administration is preparing dramatic cuts to the federal budget to reduce spending by over $10 trillion over 10 years, while also promising to increase defense spending and cut taxes that predominantly benefit wealthy Americans. Severe budget cuts will largely fall on critical safety net and other essential programs, including affordable housing, community development, and transportation programs that help raise families out of poverty—programs that are already facing devastating cuts in the upcoming budget year because of the very low spending caps required by law.

Organizations and advocates concerned about transportation, housing, community development, and homelessness are working together to circulate a letter urging Congress to lift the harmful caps on federal spending and provide the highest level of funding possible for these programs in fiscal year (FY) 2018.

Please sign your organization on today at: http://bit.ly/2jnY5Ee

Why This is Important

Congress should not balance the budget on the backs of low income families. With more households struggling to make ends meet—and our nation's affordable housing and transportation infrastructure deteriorating—we cannot afford funding cuts to the very programs that sustain our communities and help families thrive.

The Department of Transportation and HUD help more than 5 million seniors, people with disabilities, and other families afford stable and safe housing, promote economic mobility, build critical transportation infrastructure, and spur economic development in our communities. Through these investments, we can reduce homelessness and housing instability, improve our nation's infrastructure, and encourage economic growth and job creation.

How You Can Take Action

Members of Congress need to hear from you! Join advocates around the country by signing a letter urging Congress to lift harmful spending caps and to provide the highest level of funding possible for affordable housing, community development, and transportation programs.

Please click here to sign your organization on to the letter. **The deadline to sign the letter is March 3.**

To view the letter to Members of Congress, visit: http://bit.ly/2ioVsDU

Please share the letter and encourage organizations in your network to sign.

Questions/Comments? Email outreach@nlihc.org.

NLIHC NEWS

Ron Terwilliger Provides Matching Gift for NLIHC 2017 Housing Leadership Awards Reception!

NLIHC is pleased to announce that J. Ronald Terwilliger has provided a generous matching gift for the 2017 Housing Leadership Awards Reception! Make a contribution today and your support will be matched up to a total value of $20,000!

Each year, NLIHC honors two extraordinary individuals for their contributions to affordable housing. The Cushing Niles Dolbeare Lifetime Service Award, named after NLIHC's late founder, goes to an individual who has demonstrated a life-long commitment to achieving safe, decent, and affordable homes for low income people. The Edward W. Brooke Housing Leadership Award, named for the late Senator Brooke (R-MA) who championed low income housing as a U.S. senator and later as chair of the NLIHC board of directors, goes to an exemplary housing leader who has championed affordable housing on the national level.

Mr. Terwilliger, founder of the J. Ronald Terwilliger Foundation for Housing America's Families, will receive the 2017 Brooke Award for his outstanding contributions to elevating the national discussion on recalibrating federal housing policy to better serve the needs of low income households. **Amy S. Anthony**, former CEO and founder of Preservation of Affordable Housing (POAH), will receive the 2017 Dolbeare Award for her many years of dedication, service, and innovative leadership in producing and preserving affordable rental housing for low income households.

The Annual Leadership Reception is NLIHC's single fundraising event, the proceeds of which constitute a significant part of NLIHC's budget.

Double the value of your contribution to the Leadership Awards Reception up to a total value of $20,000 by donating today at www.nlihc.org/donate and help us honor these two extraordinary individuals.

The 2017 Leadership Reception takes place on Tuesday, April 4 from 6 pm to 8 pm at the Washington Court Hotel in Washington DC. For more information or questions, please contact Christina Sin at csin@nlihc.org or 202-507-7453.

Time is Running Out to Register for NLIHC's 2017 Housing Policy Forum: Advancing Solutions in a Changing Landscape, April 2-4

Register today for NLIHC's 2017 Housing Policy Forum: Advancing Solutions in a Changing Landscape. The forum will take place at the Washington Court Hotel, Washington, DC, April 2-4. The Forum is filling up quickly, so register as soon as possible at: http://bit.ly/2dnJpnS

The Forum will provide thought-leaders, policy experts, researchers, affordable housing advocates and practitioners, and low income residents the opportunity to discuss the expected priorities of the 115th Congress with Capitol Hill insiders; rebalancing federal housing investments through tax reform; lessons learned from the first year of implementation of the national Housing Trust Fund; building an expansive housing movement with health, education, criminal justice, and other sectors; ideas for addressing the needs in public housing; and considerations related to housing assistance programs and the potential for a new renters' tax credit. The third day of the Forum, April 4, is designed to give participants the opportunity to visit their congressional delegations on Capitol Hill.

NLIHC has invited HUD Secretary Nominee **Dr. Ben Carson** to share his thoughts about America's affordable housing challenges, HUD's role in addressing them, his priorities for the future, and to hear directly from low income residents, advocates and practitioners on their questions and concerns.

A special session for low income residents will be held on Sunday, April 2 from 9 am – 1 pm. Residents attending this session should plan on arriving on Saturday evening.

Register for the forum at: http://bit.ly/2dnJpnS

Join Webinar on NLIHC's New Housing Affordability GAP Report, March 2

NLIHC will hold a webinar on the 2017 edition of its report *The GAP: A Shortage of Affordable Homes* on March 2. The report measures the availability of rental housing affordable to extremely low income (ELI) households and other income groups nationwide. It shows that the U.S. has a shortage of 7.4 million affordable rental homes available to the nation's 11.4 million ELI renter households, or just 35 affordable and available units for every 100 ELI renter households. Seventy-one percent of ELI renter households are severely cost-burdened, spending more than half of their income on rent and utilities. *The GAP* report also indicates that the shortage disappears for households higher up the income ladder.

This year's analysis is slightly different from previous years in that NLIHC adopted the federal government's new statutory definition for ELI households, which are those whose income is less than 30% of their area median income (AMI) or the poverty guideline, whichever is higher. The report shows that ELI renter households face a shortage of affordable and available rental homes in every state. The supply ranges from 15 affordable and available homes for every 100 ELI renter households in Nevada to 61 in Alabama. ELI renter households also face a shortage of affordable and available rental homes in every major metropolitan area. Among the 50 largest metropolitan areas, the supply ranges from 12 affordable and available homes for every 100 ELI renter households in Las Vegas, NV to 46 in Boston, MA.

The report demonstrates why federal housing expenditures must be better targeted to serve households with the greatest needs. It calls for adoption of the NLIHC-led United for Homes (UFH) campaign proposals to rebalance federal housing policy by making modest reforms to the mortgage interest deduction (MID) and investing the savings into affordable housing programs for the lowest income households.

NLIHC invites all affordable housing advocates to join a webinar on March 2 at 2 pm ET to learn about NLIHC's 2017 edition of *The GAP* and about the UFH campaign. The webinar will review critical findings from *The GAP* report, share key information and resources from the newly designed UFH website, and provide legislative updates related to affordable housing, comprehensive tax reform, and the MID.

Register for the webinar today at: http://bit.ly/2kr9AiH

UNITED FOR HOMES

Check Out the New United for Homes Website!

NLIHC has launched a new United for Homes (UFH) website to advance the campaign to make modest reforms to the mortgage interest deduction (MID) that would benefit millions of lower income homeowners and generate revenue to end homelessness and housing poverty in America. The new website features important information about the campaign's proposal, breaks down the impact of the proposal both nationally and by state, and provides resources for advocating with Members of Congress and communicating through social and traditional media. The new website provides a set of tools and strategies to engage others to join the campaign, updates on new legislation and calls to action related to the campaign, and a list of the more than 2,300 current UFH endorsers.

Check out the website at: www.unitedforhomes.org and let us know what you think.

NLIHC invites all affordable housing advocates to join a webinar on March 2, 2 pm ET to learn about the United for Homes campaign and NLIHC's 2017 edition of *The Gap: A Shortage of Affordable Housing* (see The GAP report article in this *Memo*). The webinar will review critical findings from *The GAP* report, share key information and resources from the newly designed UFH website, and provide legislative updates related to affordable housing, comprehensive tax reform, and the MID.

Register for the March 2 webinar at: http://bit.ly/2kr9AiH

The next monthly UFH endorser webinar is scheduled for March 8, 2 pm ET. This webinar will focus on how to effectively organize and advocate for the UFH campaign and on ways to expand the movement to include allies in healthcare, education, transportation, labor, and other sectors.

If you have not already registered for the monthly UFH endorser webinars, register for the March 8 event at: http://bit.ly/2irHS2E. Once you register, you will not need to register again for the monthly UFH endorser webinars.

If you are not already a UFH endorser, please join the campaign at: http://nlihc.org/unitedforhomes/support

CONGRESS

Representative Ellison Introduces Legislation to End Homelessness and Housing Poverty through Tax Reform

Representative Keith Ellison (D-MN) reintroduced on February 8 the "Common Sense Housing Investment Act of 2017," (H.R. 948) to end homelessness and housing poverty through tax reform. The bill calls for modest reforms to the mortgage interest deduction (MID), a $70 billion tax write-off that largely benefits America's highest-income households, and reinvests the significant savings into providing affordable housing for people with the greatest needs by expanding the national Housing Trust Fund, the Low Income Housing Tax Credit, public housing, and rental assistance solutions—without adding any costs to the federal government.

The reforms are simple and bipartisan. First, the bill reduces the amount of a mortgage eligible for the tax break from $1 million to $500,000—impacting fewer than 6% of homeowners with a mortgage. Second, the bill converts the MID into a tax credit, allowing 15 million more low and moderate income homeowners who currently do not benefit from the MID to get a much-needed tax break.

H.R. 948 builds on the success of Mr. Ellison's recent Dear Colleague letter, signed by 34 members of Congress, urging the Ways and Means Committee to reinvest any savings from housing-related tax reforms into affordable housing solutions.

NLIHC and the United for Homes campaign—including more than 2,300 national, state, and local organizations and elected officials in all 435 congressional districts—strongly endorse H.R 948. We urge all housing advocates to ask their Representatives to cosponsor H.R. 948 to help end homelessness and housing poverty in comprehensive tax reform.

The text of H.R. 948 is at: http://bit.ly/2l3e0KY

A copy of Mr. Ellison's Dear Colleague letter can be found at: http://bit.ly/2j2j8MM

More information on the MID is at: http://bit.ly/2ldllbq

Join the United for Homes campaign at: http://nlihc.org/unitedforhomes/support

Senate Approves Cabinet Picks for Treasury and OMB

The Senate voted to confirm two of President Donald Trump's nominees for cabinet positions. Steven Mnuchin was confirmed on February 13 as secretary of the Department of the Treasury by a largely party-line vote of 53-47. Finance Committee Ranking Member Ron Wyden (D-OR) issued a statement in strong opposition. "The person who becomes Treasury Secretary ought to be somebody who's ready to work on behalf of all Americans, including people from those corners of this country where optimism has dimmed," Mr. Wyden wrote. "If Steven Mnuchin's record is any indication, he would not fit that mold. Not even close."

The Senate confirmed Mr. Trump's choice to lead the Office of Management and Budget, Representative Mick Mulvaney (R-SC), by an even slimmer margin—51 to 49—on February 16. Senator John McCain (R-AZ) joined Democrats in opposing Mr. Mulvaney, citing the nominee's support for firm spending limits on defense spending. "I will vote to oppose Congressman Mulvaney's nomination because it would be irresponsible to place the future of the defense budget in the hands of a person with such a record and judgment on national security," McCain said.

The Senate will vote on the remaining Cabinet nominees—including Dr. Ben Carson, chosen to lead HUD—when Congress returns from recess the week of February 26.

Mr. Wyden's statement on Mr. Mnuchin's confirmation is at: http://bit.ly/2lPWvzq

House Committee Examines the Geography of Poverty

The House Ways and Means Subcommittee on Human Resources held a hearing on "The Geography of Poverty" the week of February 12. The hearing explored the increasing poverty in suburban communities, the high levels of poverty in rural areas, and the barriers and solutions to addressing poverty.

Elizabeth Kneebone from the Brookings Institution spoke about the growing poverty in suburban areas that lack the systems and infrastructure needed to serve those with low incomes. "We need to help more people in more places," she said. "We are fighting an uphill battle, but the federal government could be a better partner." Ms. Kneebone recommended providing states and communities with more flexibility to experiment with cross-silo strategies. While more targeted federal investments are needed, she also described a lack of capacity to implement solutions in many communities. "We need organizations that can target and marshal resources," she said.

William Leavy of the Greater West Town Project in Chicago, IL spoke about efforts to link intensive job training to local industries to help raise people out of poverty. Mr. Leavy cited major barriers in local job markets, including racial discrimination, the high number of ex-offenders returning to their communities, and the many students who do not complete high school. Mr. Leavy emphasized the connection between housing and economic mobility. "If someone doesn't have secure housing, they won't do well in a job," he said.

Mark Partridge, a professor at Ohio State University, emphasized the high rate of poverty in rural communities, where poverty is often hidden and receives less attention. Tammy Slater, CEO of Goodwill Industries of Greater

Nebraska, added that poverty in rural communities is more difficult to address because there are fewer nonprofit organizations with the capacity to make a difference.

For more information, see a recent blog post from the House Ways and Means Committee at: http://bit.ly/2lmvBi4

NATIONAL HOUSING TRUST FUND

HUD Has Approved Thirty-eight HTF Allocation Plans

HUD has approved 38 national Housing Trust Fund (HTF) Allocation Plans as of February 17. Of the 38, HUD has publicly identified 21: Arizona, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Hawaii, Idaho, Indiana, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Montana, Nevada, New Hampshire, North Dakota, Oregon, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Vermont, Virginia, and West Virginia.

The HUD Office of Community Planning and Development (CPD) publicly identifies the states that have approved HTF Allocation Plans only after a state's congressional delegation is notified and a state has obligated its HTF allocation by entering the required information into CPD's management information system, the Integrated Disbursement and Information System (IDIS).

The HTF statute requires each state to prepare an annual Allocation Plan showing how it will distribute the funds based on priority housing needs. The interim rule amended the Consolidated Plan (ConPlan) regulations by adding HTF-specific Allocation Plan requirements to the ConPlan's long-term Strategic Plan and Annual Plan rules. A state's Allocation Plan must describe the requirements that must be met by entities applying for HTF funds and the criteria the state will use to select applications.

Allocation Plans must give funding priority to applications based on a number of features listed in the statute, including:

- The extent to which rents are affordable, especially for extremely low income households.
- The length of time rents will remain affordable.
- The project's merit. The interim rule gives as examples of merit: housing that serves people with special needs, housing accessible to transit or employment centers, and housing that includes green building and sustainable development elements.
- Geographic diversity. Neither the statute nor the interim rule explicitly mention rural areas.

Copies of the HUD-approved HTF Allocation Plans for Arizona, Delaware, Indiana, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Hampshire, North Dakota, and Vermont are available on NLIHC's HTF Implementation webpage at: http://nlihc.org/issues/nhtf/state-allocation-plans. Allocation Plans for the other states will be added as they become available.

More information about the HTF is at: http://nlihc.org/issues/nhtf and on page 3-1 of NLIHC's *2016 Advocates' Guide* at: http://bit.ly/2kwFuFM

HUD

HUD Provides Guidance on Implementing Smoke-Free Public Housing Rule

HUD published Notice PIH-2017-03 providing guidance to public housing agencies (PHAs) regarding instituting and enforcing smoke-free policies in public housing, as required by a final rule issued on December 5, 2016 (see *Memo*, 12/5/16). PHAs must design and implement a policy barring the use of prohibited tobacco products in all public housing units, interior common areas, and outdoor areas within 25 feet of public housing and administrative office buildings (collectively referred to as “restricted areas”).

The guidance strongly encourages PHAs to engage with residents early in the development of smoke-free policies and to work with resident councils. HUD also encourages PHAs to post signs about their new smoke-free policy. If PHAs do post signs, they must be accessible to all residents and visitors (including persons with disabilities) and must be in multiple languages consistent with HUD’s guidance on Limited English Proficiency. PHAs are also encouraged to use various communication methods, such as letters, flyers, and seminars, to share this information. The Notice also encourages PHAs to provide residents with information on smoking cessation assistance.

According to the Notice, PHAs are required to amend individual resident leases. All residents must sign the lease amendment as a condition of their continuing occupancy. Lease amendments should note the availability and location of any designated smoking areas. The guidance encourages PHAs to include information in the lease amendment about what the PHA will do regarding residents with disabilities who smoke and request a reasonable accommodation. HUD also suggests the lease amendment identify which actions would be considered a violation of the PHA’s smoke-free policy.

Although the rule does not require designated smoking areas (DSAs), PHAs may provide them outside of restricted areas. DSAs may include partially enclosed structures and should include appropriate seating, shade, and adequate lighting. DSAs must be accessible to persons with disabilities by way of flat or paved pathways and/or ramps or other accommodations.

The use of e-cigarettes, formally referred to as Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS), is not prohibited. The Notice states, however, that research shows the aerosol exhaled by e-cigarette users contains nicotine and potentially harmful ingredients, but generally at much lower levels than tobacco smoke. The guidance indicates that PHAs have the flexibility to prohibit e-cigarettes in all developments and common areas, or PHAs may allow the use of e-cigarettes within someone’s unit but prohibit them in common areas. The notice reminds PHAs that residents should always be considered prior to adopting stricter smoke-free policies than required by the rule.

The Notice provides considerable guidance regarding the required PHA enforcement and monitoring of their smoke-free policies. When enforcing a lease, the guidance states that PHAs must provide residents with due process and allow residents to exercise their right to an informal settlement process and a formal hearing. The Notice declares that PHAs may not evict someone for a single incident of smoking. Rather, the Notice encourages PHAs to adopt a graduated enforcement approach that includes escalating warnings along with educating the resident and providing smoking cessation resources or referrals before pursuing eviction. HUD states that terminating someone’s tenancy and evicting them should be a last resort.

The Notice includes links to resources that provide examples of how some PHAs have approached and managed smoke-free policies.

The smoke-free rule became effective on February 3. PHAs have 18 months to develop and implement their smoke-free policy.

Notice PIH-2017-03 is at: http://bit.ly/2m2XXe9

RESEARCH

Renters in High-Cost Cities Express Strong NIMBYism

A report by Michael Hankinson at Harvard's Joint Center for Housing Studies, *When Do Renters Behave Like Homeowners? High Rent, Price Anxiety, and NIMBYism,* finds that renters in high-cost housing markets typically support new housing development citywide but are likely to oppose market-rate housing in their own neighborhood. They behave like homeowners who oppose development based on spatial proximity, known as NIMBYism ("not in my back yard"). Renter NIMBYism and institutional arrangements that prioritize neighborhood over citywide interests increase the difficulty of building housing in high-cost cities.

In a national survey of 3,019 adults, renters did not exhibit the same level of opposition to new housing as homeowners. Seventy-two percent of homeowners did not support a hypothetical 10% citywide increase in housing supply compared to 41% of renters. Forty-two percent of homeowners supported a hypothetical ban on new housing in their neighborhood compared to 35% of renters.

The survey indicated that homeowners nationwide were less likely to support a proposed building located a half mile or less from their home compared to one two miles from their home. By comparison, the level of support by renters nationwide for a market-rate development was not influenced by the building's distance from their home. In fact, these renters were somewhat more likely to support buildings with affordable units less than a mile from their home compared to developments two miles away.

Renter NIMBYism was apparent, however, in high-cost cities. While renters in high-cost cities were about as likely as renters in other cities to support a 10% increase in their city's housing supply, they were less likely to support new market-rate development less than one-eighth of a mile from their home compared to development two miles from their home. Renters who felt lower housing prices would be best for their city, indicating they were "price anxious," were less likely to support market-rate development near their home than those who were not price anxious. One explanation for these findings is that price-anxious renters may fear that a new building in their neighborhood would have little impact on citywide prices but could attract more housing demand to their neighborhood, increasing neighborhood rents.

Mr. Hankinson also conducted an exit poll of 1,660 voters in San Francisco. Seventy-three percent of homeowners and 84% of renters supported a 10% increase in the city's housing supply. But when it came to their own neighborhood, 40% of homeowners and 62% of renters supported a ban on new housing. Even when Mr. Hankinson controlled for demographics, such as voters' income, race, age, gender, and ideology, renters were more likely to support a neighborhood ban than homeowners by nine percentage points.

Mr. Hankinson provides strategies to combat residents' active opposition to new market-rate housing in their neighborhoods. City governments could offer existing renters stronger anti-displacement protections in exchange for changes in zoning that allow higher density development, such as including in new developments affordable units available for neighborhood residents. Mr. Hankinson notes that fair housing must be taken into consideration and that any plan to exchange community benefits for increased density must be standardized citywide. Mr. Hankinson also argues that more research on the political behavior of renters is needed because in some cities renters' NIMBYism mobilization matches that of homeowners, and these renters can have a significant impact on local political decisions. Homeowners have typically been seen as the influential players in local politics, zoning, and housing policy.

When Do Renters Behave Like Homeowners? High Rent, Price Anxiety, and NIMBYism is available at: http://bit.ly/2lLVrJJ

Cuts to Safety Net Would Disproportionately Affect Working-Age Adults without College Degrees

A report by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP), *Poverty Reduction Programs Help Adults Lacking College Degrees the Most*, finds that 87% of working-age adults (18 to 64 years of age) lifted out of poverty by poverty-reduction and safety net programs are in families that have no members with a college degree. More than half of these adults are white. These adults and their families would be significantly and negatively impacted by cuts to these programs.

The report examined the impact of safety-net and poverty-reduction programs like Social Security, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), Supplemental Security Income (SSI), the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), and the Child Tax Credit (CTC) on poverty among working-age adults between 18 and 64 years of age. Without factoring in income from these programs, the poverty rate in 2014 was 30.4% among adults in families without a bachelor's degree and 8.7% for those in families in which at least one person had a bachelor's degree. If income from these programs were accounted for, the poverty rates would be 18.5% and 6.4% for adults in families without and with a bachelor's degree, respectively.

Among working-age adults in families without a bachelor's degree who would otherwise be in poverty, 6.2 million whites (44%), 2.8 million blacks (43%), 2.4 million Hispanics (28%), and 0.7 million adults of other races (37%) were lifted out of poverty by these programs.

Poverty Reduction Programs Help Adults Lacking College Degrees the Most is available at: http://bit.ly/2lXbrb2

Some Moving to Work Public Housing Agencies Promote Mobility

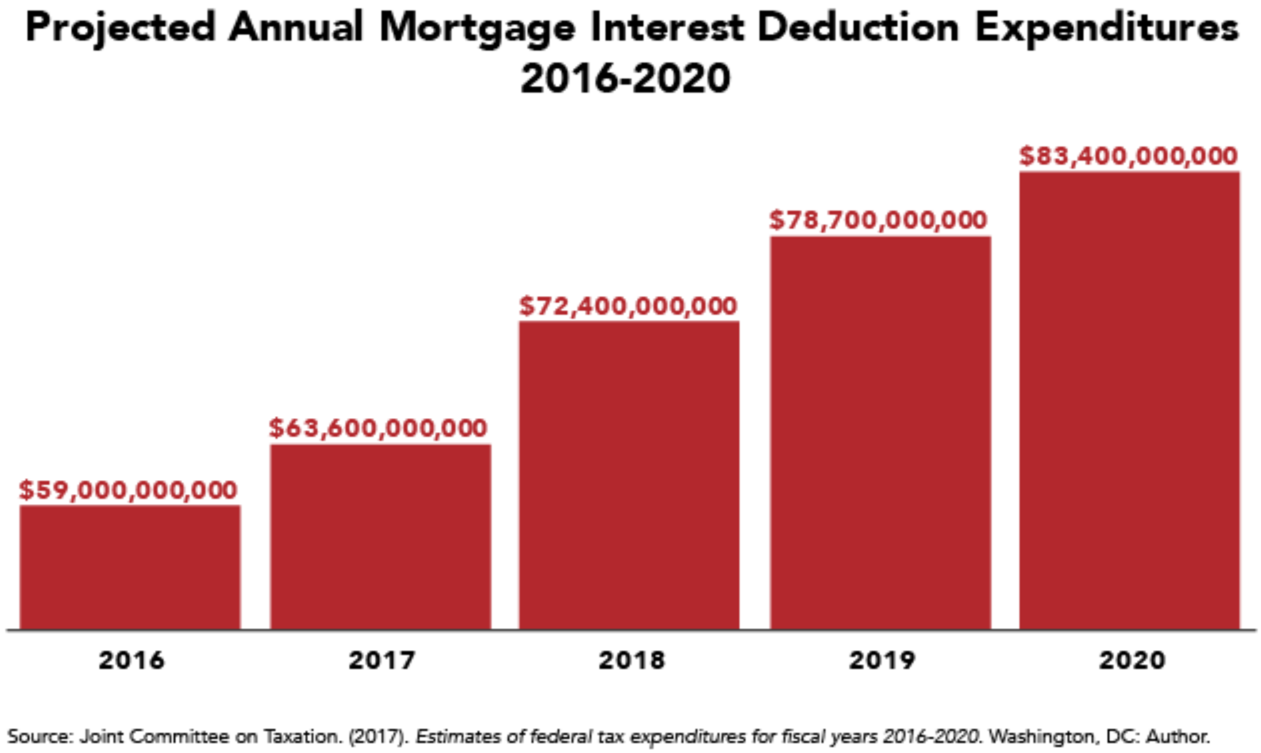
The Urban Institute released a report, *Moving to Work and Neighborhood Opportunity*, summarizing the mobility-related initiatives of 39 Moving to Work (MTW) public housing agencies (PHAs). MTW is a demonstration program started in 2008 that gives participating PHAs greater flexibility in their housing assistance policies and use of federal funds. One goal of MTW is to increase housing choices for low-income families, including access to high-opportunity neighborhoods. Twenty-four of the 39 MTW PHAs were planning or implementing policies to encourage geographic mobility in 2015.

The report provides an inventory of MTW PHAs' initiatives related to increasing housing choices and geographic mobility. Of the 24 MTW PHAs with mobility-related initiatives: four had comprehensive mobility programs, which provide counseling or case management and other services to Housing Choice Voucher (voucher) recipients before, during, or after their search for housing; eight had incentives and supports for landlords to accept vouchers, including financial incentives such as property damage or vacancy insurance and modifications to inspection requirements; eleven had incentives and supports for tenants to make voucher moves to opportunity-rich areas, such as financial incentives or modifications to voucher payment standards in opportunity areas; and four that place Project Based Vouchers (PBVs) in high-opportunity neighborhoods. However, fourteen agencies had restrictive policies that limit mobility, such as requiring households to live in their current jurisdiction for a year before moving to another jurisdiction.

For more details, see *Moving to Work and Neighborhood Opportunity* at: http://urbn.is/2lMAvkW

FACT OF THE WEEK

Mortgage Interest Deduction Expenditures to Grow 41% from 2016-2020



Source: Joint Committee on Taxation. (2017). *Estimates of federal tax expenditures for fiscal years 2016-2020*. Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved from https://www.jct.gov/publications.html?func=startdown&id=4971.

FROM THE FIELD

Texas Housers' Report Shows Reduction in Segregation in Tax Credit Developments

Texas Low Income Housing Information Service (Texas Housers), an NLIHC state partner, released a report on January 25 titled "Fair Housing and Balanced Choices: Did Texas Reduce Government-Funded Segregation?" The report analyzes the effect of a 2013 shift in Low Income Housing Tax Credit award criteria on the location of housing tax credit developments in the state's five largest metro areas: Austin, Dallas, Fort Worth, Houston, and San Antonio. The new race-neutral criteria resulted in properties located in areas with lower concentrations of racial minorities and higher opportunity. The report finds the award-criteria changes were a success.

In 2013, in response to a federal fair housing suit that made its way to the Supreme Court in 2015 (see *Memo* 6/29/15), the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs reformed their system for awarding housing tax credits. Prior to the changes, the state's Qualified Allocation Plan (QAP) process for evaluating tax credit applications favored developments in areas with high concentrations of minorities and high poverty rates. People of color constitute 90% of Texas residents with housing vouchers, and the concentration of tax credit developments in minority neighborhoods served to perpetuate racial segregation. In addition to being located in areas with high minority populations, the developments given tax credits prior to the 2013 were located in low opportunity neighborhoods with limited access to quality schools. The State designed the 2013 reforms, including points for an "Opportunity Index" and "Education Excellence" in the QAP, to reverse these trends. Texas Housers evaluated whether the reforms, which emphasized developments in low-poverty, high-opportunity neighborhoods zoned for high-performing schools, were successful in reducing the locating of tax credit developments in racially segregated communities.

The report compared the location of developments in Texas's five largest metro areas that were awarded 9% tax credits between 2006 and 2012 to those awarded between 2013 and 2015, after the reforms were implemented. The study found that 68% of tax credits awarded between 2006 and 2012 went to developments in tracts with Hispanic or black populations above the state average. The 2013 changes to the QAP reversed this trend; between 2013 and 2015 the majority of the developments awarded tax credits were located in areas with below-average minority populations. Beyond racial demographics, 52.2% of non-elderly tax credit developments in the five largest metro areas were located in Census tracts with less than 15% poverty levels, up from 22.8% in the seven years prior to the reforms. Whereas 23.2% of units awarded tax credits between 2006 and 2012 were located in areas of extreme poverty, with poverty levels above 40%, only 5.5% of developments awarded tax credits after the reforms were located in areas of extreme poverty.

The Texas Housers study of tax credit awards in the five metropolitan areas found that Texas had in fact reduced "government-funded segregation" through the 2013 reforms. On the other hand, the report concluded that three years of development aimed at decreasing segregation and increasing opportunity for residents of tax credit housing had only just begun to make up for decades of racial segregation fostered by previous tax credit developments. "Low income families still have limited housing choice in low poverty, safe neighborhoods with access to high performing schools," the report states. "It would take many more QAP cycles before 'balance' in housing choice was reached." Texas Housers advocates for continued consideration of Education Excellence and the Opportunity Index in the QAP process. Unfortunately, critics of the reforms successfully petitioned for changes to the 2017 award process which threaten the advances made.

"If we want housing choices to be truly balanced and integrated, we need to learn from Texas's experience," said Charlie Duncan, Texas Housers fair housing planner and report co-author. "With the information we now have, there's no going back to the segregated status quo."

Access the report at: http://bit.ly/2lT344g

For more information, contact Texas Housers Communications Director Will Livesley-O'Neill at: will@texashousing.org

RESOURCES

CRS Issues Guide to Researching Federal Legislation and Regulations

The Congressional Research Service (CRS) published a guide for researching federal legislation and regulations. Although written for Congressional staff, the guide is a useful resource for advocates.

Under "Researching Current Federal Legislation," the guide discusses Congress.gov, where advocates can find bill summaries, text, sponsors, cosponsors, and status. The guide explains that the Daily Digest section of the *Congressional Record* summarizes actions taken in the House of Representatives and Senate and identifies committee hearings and committee meetings scheduled for the next legislative day. Links to the House and Senate homepages provide directories of representatives and senators and show each chamber's calendar, committee activities, and roll call votes.

The "Researching Current Federal Regulations" section of the guide describes the *Code of Federal Regulations* and the *Federal Register*. It also explains RegInfo.gov, the site that provides a list of all proposed rules undergoing Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs (OIRA) review as required by Executive Order 12866 from 1993. Regulations.gov is the site for submitting comments on proposed rules and reading comments already submitted.

The "Daily Compilation of Presidential Documents" provides the dates on which the president signed or vetoed legislation, and contains executive orders, nominations submitted to the Senate, and transcripts of presidential messages to Congress.

CRS Report RL33895, *Researching Current Federal Legislation and Regulations: A Guide to Resources for Congressional Staff,* is available at: http://bit.ly/2lRNnq8

Chapter 2 of NLIHC's *2016 Advocates' Guide* at http://nlihc.org/library/guides is another resource for advocates regarding the legislative and regulatory process. Topics covered include: How Laws Are Made, The Federal Budget and Appropriations Process, Introduction to the Federal Regulatory Process, and Congressional Advocacy. The *2017 Advocates' Guide* will be available in early April.

EVENT

Webinar on VAWA Final Rule, March 1

The National Housing Law Project will hold a webinar on HUD's final rule implementing the housing provisions of the "Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013" (VAWA) rule (see *Memo*, 10/31/16). HUD also released a notice of occupancy rights under VAWA, a model emergency transfer plan, and a VAWA self-certification form (see *Memo*, 12/19/16). The free webinar will take place on Wednesday, March 1, at 2:00 pm ET, 1:00 pm CT, noon MT, 11:00 am PT. Register at: http://bit.ly/2kNBGAI

The webinar will provide a summary and analysis of key parts of the final rule, which include:

1. Extending VAWA protections to survivors of sexual assault;
2. Extending VAWA protections to cover all HUD programs listed in VAWA 2013, including the national Housing Trust Fund, which was not in the VAWA statute;
3. Establishing a 180-day period for housing providers to complete an emergency transfer plan;
4. Requiring covered housing providers to provide a notification of VAWA rights to existing tenants and applicants;
5. Outlining what is a "reasonable time" for survivors to establish eligibility for a covered HUD program in cases where, due to VAWA crimes, the tenant that established eligibility is no longer a member of the survivor's household; and
6. Revising and creating conforming regulations for the covered housing programs.

Presenters include:

- Karlo Ng, staff attorney, National Housing Law Project
- Sandra Park, senior staff attorney, Women's Rights Project, American Civil Liberties Union
- Kate Walz, director of housing justice/director of litigation, Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law
- Renee Williams, staff attorney, National Housing Law Project

NLIHC IN THE NEWS

NLIHC in the News for the Week of February 12

The following are some of the news stories that NLIHC contributed to during the week of February 12:

- "Low-income housing advocates see threats ahead," *Scotsman Guide*, February 16 at: http://bit.ly/2kvi6wZ

- "New Urbanism, New HUD," *Landscape Architecture Magazine*, February 16 at: http://bit.ly/2kxc12W

- "Another Front in the Texas War to Preserve Segregated Housing," *CityLab*, February 15 at: http://bit.ly/2l1uLpW

- "FHLBank San Francisco Names Iosefa Alofaituli to Affordable Housing Advisory Council and Reappoints Three Current Members," *Yahoo! Finance*, February 14 at: https://yhoo.it/2lrdwPy

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