NATIONAL LOW INCOME HOUSING COALITION
Memo to Members

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NLIHC in the News

Take Action

Meet with Your Members of Congress In-District During April Recess!

Congress is in recess until April 21. This is an ideal time to attend a town hall or to schedule an in-district meeting or site visit with your federal lawmakers. We urge advocates to educate your elected officials about the importance of affordable housing, why potential budget cuts will hurt people with low incomes, and how we can increase affordable housing resources through tax reform.

Here are some resources you can use:

- **Spring 2017 Issues Guide**: Learn more about the top five critical issues before Congress and what advocates can ask their senators and representatives to do.
- **Advocacy Toolkit and Webinar:** A toolkit from the Campaign for Housing and Community Development Funding (CHCDF) includes talking points, sample op-eds, tweets, and how-to's for setting up in-district meetings and site visits. The CHCDF webinar includes information on President Trump's budget proposal and tips to effectively engage lawmakers.
- **A Place to Call Home report and Success Stories:** The report shows why affordable housing is a smart investment in health, education, economic mobility and the economy, and includes more than 100 affordable housing and community development success stories from across the nation.
- **Town Halls in Your Community**: Check out **townhallproject.com** to see if your lawmakers are holding town hall meetings. Here are some affordable housing related questions to ask:
    - Question 1: Only one in four people who need housing assistance actually get help, and the spending caps only make this situation worse. Unless the caps are lifted, programs that keep roofs over the heads of many people in our community will see funding cuts. **Where will these families go if they are evicted from their homes or have to live out of their cars?**
    - Question 2: President Trump ran his campaign promising to rebuild communities. But his budget proposes to eliminate resources that our state uses to revitalize distressed areas, build senior centers and health clinics, help families get out of shelters and into homes, and help low income families become homeowners. **Do you think President Trump has broken his promise?**
    - Question 3: Many have said that President Trump's budget is "dead-on-arrival." But it is not enough to oppose President Trump's budget. HUD's budget has already been cut to the bone. The only way to solve this problem is to lift the spending caps that would make it impossible to address the affordable housing crisis in this country. **Will you commit to this?**
    - Question 4: Republicans in Congress are currently discussing ways to reform the mortgage interest deduction in tax reform. This raises the question of how Congress should invest the significant savings: to lower corporate or individual tax rates or to invest in affordable homes for people with the greatest needs. **Do you support keeping housing tax reform dollars in housing?**

Sign onto Letter Urging Congress to Protect and Expand the National Housing Trust Fund, Deadline Extended to April 28

Sign your organization onto a letter calling on Congress to protect and expand the national Housing Trust Fund (HTF). The deadline for signing the letter has been extended to April 28.

The HTF is a critical new resource for building and preserving homes for the lowest income people in America. In 2016, its first year of funding, states made plans to use HTF resources to increase the supply of affordable rental homes for extremely low income veterans, seniors, people with disabilities or special needs, low-wage workers, and people experiencing homelessness. With more resources, the HTF can play a critical role in ensuring the nation's 11.4 million extremely low income households have access to decent, affordable housing.

The HTF is the first new federal affordable housing resource in a generation, and it is exclusively targeted to build and preserve housing affordable to people with the lowest incomes. In 2016, the first $174 million in HTF dollars were allocated to the states. Because the HTF is administered as a block grant, each state has the flexibility to decide how best to use HTF resources to address its most pressing housing needs. The first year of funding was a strong start to the program, but Congress must significantly expand the HTF to address the critical affordable housing needs of the lowest income renters in every community in the U.S.

The need to protect and preserve the HTF is relevant to Congressional negotiations on FY17 and FY18 appropriations. Additionally, Congress is considering reforms to the government sponsored enterprises (GSE), Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, in 2017. Because the HTF is funded through a small assessment on Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac's new business each year, reforms to the GSEs would have a direct impact on the HTF. Previous bipartisan legislation reforming the GSEs included a significant increase in resources to the HTF. Congressional leaders considering reforms during this session of Congress must protect and expand the HTF to assist the 7.4 million extremely low income households who lack access to affordable homes. There may also be opportunities to expand the HTF in a comprehensive infrastructure package and in comprehensive tax reform efforts.

Sign the letter by **April 28** urging Congress to protect and expand the HTF and share it with your networks.

Contact your Congressional delegation directly at: http://bit.ly/2lBR7eM

Tell Your Representative to Cosponsor "The Common Sense Housing Investment Act"

Urge your representative to cosponsor the "Common Sense Housing Investment Act of 2017" (H.R. 948) to address homelessness and housing poverty in America without any increase in federal spending. The lack of affordable rental housing for the lowest income people has reached crisis levels in every state and congressional district. Through tax reform legislation, Congress can make the tax code fairer for more families, reduce income inequality and racial inequity, and provide affordable housing to millions of the lowest income people in America.

The "Common Sense Housing Investment Act of 2017" introduced by Representative Keith Ellison (D-MN) on February 7 calls for modest reforms to the mortgage interest deduction, a $70 billion tax write-off largely benefitting America's highest-income households. The reforms would provide new tax relief to millions of lower income homeowners and would reinvest more than $241 billion in savings over 10 years into affordable housing for people with the greatest needs.

The bill would boost funding for the Housing Trust Fund, the Low Income Housing Tax Credit, public housing, and rental assistance solutions without adding any costs to the federal government.

The bill would do two things. First, it reduces the amount of a mortgage eligible for a tax break from $1 million to $500,000. This change would impact fewer than 6% of mortgage holders nationwide, and even those who hold large mortgages would continue to receive tax relief on the first $500,000 of their mortgage. Second, the bill converts the mortgage interest deduction into a tax credit, allowing 15 million more low and moderate income homeowners who do not currently benefit from the mortgage interest deduction to get a much-needed tax break.

The NLIHC-led United for Homes campaign - including more than 2,300 national, state, and local organizations and elected officials in all 435 congressional districts - strongly endorses H.R 948.

More information on the "Common Sense Housing Investment Act" is at: http://bit.ly/2mNMJva

How You Can Take Action

1. Ask your representative to cosponsor H.R. 948 to help end homelessness and housing poverty in comprehensive tax reform.

   Call Congress Today!

2. Endorse the United for Homes campaign that calls for reforms that mirror Mr. Ellison's bill! A list of UFH endorsers is available at: http://bit.ly/2mNYmCr

   Join The Campaign!

3. Ask your colleagues, friends, and family to call their representatives and join the United for Homes campaign!

NLIHC News

NLIHC Offers New Resources for Advocates and Residents

NLIHC released *Tenant Talk: A New Administration and Congress…and a Reviewed Movement for Change* and *Advocates' Guide 2017: A Primer on Federal Affordable Housing & Community Development Programs* the week of April 2.

The winter/spring edition of *Tenant Talk*, a publication for low income residents of public and assisted housing, addresses the threats and opportunities presented by the new administration and Congress and identifies areas where collaboration is needed and accountability is required. This *Tenant Talk* includes articles on the implications of President Donald Trump's history with fair housing and his budget proposal to dramatically cut housing and community development funding; threats to Housing Choice Vouchers, public housing, and Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing; and opportunities for affordable housing to be addressed in tax reform, a new infrastructure investment package, and criminal justice reform. It showcases new efforts in New Orleans and New York City to ensure justice-involved individuals can successfully return to their homes and communities, and it helps residents prepare for HUD's smoke-free rule in public housing.

The *Tenant Talk* authors and editorial board make it clear that the threats to affordable housing funding and fair housing under the new administration and Congress are unconscionable and unacceptable. They use this edition of the publication to voice opposition, offer solutions, and provide information on what affordable housing advocates can do to remain vigilant and act to ensure that people with the lowest incomes have access to affordable and decent homes. You can download *Tenant Talk* or sign up to have it delivered to your door for free if you are an NLIHC member. Become a member today at: www.nlihc.org/membership

Advocates' Guide 2017: A Primer on Federal Affordable Housing & Community Development Programs is this year's edition of NLIHC's comprehensive manual on virtually every affordable housing program and policy. The *Guide,* written by NLIHC staff and other leading experts in the field, contains synopses of housing and community development programs, laws, and regulations, as well as tools and information to guide advocates' communications with legislative and executive branches of government and to mobilize advocacy campaigns. The *Advocates' Guide* is an invaluable resource for anyone involved in or concerned about affordable housing and community development – to refresh your familiarity with housing programs, statutes, and regulations or to educate new employees working at affordable housing and community development agencies and organizations.

Advocates' Guide 2017 was made available first in print to attendees of the NLIHC 2017 Housing Policy Forum: Advancing Solutions in a Changing Landscape, April 2–4. It is now available online to the public.

The *Advocates' Guide 2017: A Primer on Federal Affordable Housing & Community Development Programs* is available at: http://nlihc.org/library/guides

Tenant Talk: A New Administration and Congress…and a Reviewed Movement for Change is available at: http://nlihc.org/library/tenanttalk/vol8-issue1

United for Homes

UFH Webinar Explores Impact of Proposed Reforms to Mortgage Interest Deduction

The United for Homes (UFH) campaign continued its series of monthly webinars for current endorsers with a session on April 12 titled "Deductions, Credits, and Homeownership: The Impact of Modest Reforms to the Mortgage Interest Deduction (MID)." The webinar explained the impact of the campaign's two proposed reforms to the MID: lowering the amount of a mortgage eligible for a tax benefit from $1.1 million to $500,000 and converting the deduction to a tax credit.

Andrew Aurand, VP for research at NLIHC, and Eric Toder, codirector of the Urban-Brookings Tax Policy Center (TPC), explained the difference between a deduction and a tax credit, why a tax credit would expand the tax benefits of a mortgage to more homeowners, and the specific impacts of the UFH proposals. Converting the MID to a tax credit would give 15 million additional homeowners a tax break. More middle-income homeowners would benefit from a tax credit than currently benefit from the MID. According to TPC, just 25% of households reporting incomes between $50,000 and $125,000 on their tax returns benefit from the MID, while 44% would benefit from the tax credit. Sixty-five percent of households with incomes greater than $125,000 benefit from the MID, while 73% would benefit from a tax credit.

View the April 12 webinar at: http://bit.ly/2obkIwX

A detailed report on the impact of the MID reforms is available at: http://tpc.io/2h6Yjim and a summary is available at: http://bit.ly/2p0LYTL

View the previous UFH endorser webinars at: http://www.unitedforhomes.org/webinars/

If you are not a UFH endorser, please join the campaign at http://www.unitedforhomes.org/join-the-movement/.

The next UFH endorser webinar will be Wednesday, May 10 at 2pm.

UFH Curated Wall Provides Snapshot of What People Are Saying about MID Reform on Social Media

The United for Homes (UFH) website features an aggregator that captures chatter on social media related to the UFH campaign and mortgage interest deduction (MID) reform. This feature provides advocates a convenient location to quickly peruse content from multiple sources like Twitter and Facebook.

The interactive "wall" aggregates posts across Twitter and Facebook that use the UFH hashtags #SmartTaxReform, #United4Homes, and #MIDReform or that mention United for Homes. Users can share posts from this wall on Twitter, Facebook, and Google Plus by hovering over the post until the "share" icon appears and then clicking on it. They can also reply to or like a post. This social media sharing feature is also available for the articles on the UnitedforHomes.org News & Information page.

We encourage everyone to visit the UFH website, check out the social media wall on the homepage, and share and contribute content.

To help populate the site, create a post from your Twitter or Facebook account using the hashtags #SmartTaxReform, #United4Homes, #MIDReform or mention "United for Homes." Here are a few sample tweets you can use:

- #United4Homes, smart proposal that will generate $Bs in savings that can be reinvested into rental housing for people w/greatest need
- #SmartTaxReform can do so much to end homelessness & hsg poverty. Join #United4Homes today to make reform happen: unitedforhomes.org
- #MIDReform, $0 new cost to fed govt, could generate $241B for affdble rental programs #SmartTaxReform & #United4Homes unitedforhomes.org
- #United4Homes proposals benefit low/mod income homeowners and lowest income renters w/greatest need: www.unitedforhomes.org

Visit the UFH website at: http://www.unitedforhomes.org/

Congress

Senators Introduce Legislation Protecting Victims of Domestic and Sexual Assault from Housing Discrimination

Senators Al Franken (D-MN) and Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH) reintroduced legislation on April 5 to reduce barriers for domestic and sexual assault victims seeking housing. The "Fair Housing for Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Survivors Act" builds on the protections provided under the Violence Against Women Act of 2013 and the Fair Housing Act of 1968 by establishing "a nationwide standard that victims of domestic violence and sexual assault cannot be evicted or denied access to housing solely for being victims of those crimes." With the new protections in this legislation, HUD and the Department of Justice would have clear and direct authority to protect victims of domestic violence and sexual assault from housing discrimination. The bill's language also serves as a model for states to adopt their own protections.

"It's unconscionable to think that someone could be evicted from their home—or outright denied housing—because they've experienced domestic violence or sexual assault… .Our bill would build on provisions in existing law that I championed to more broadly protect survivors, and I look forward to working with my colleagues to get it passed into law," said Senator Franken.

Senator Shaheen said that the bill "would ensure that we are no longer punishing victims for the crimes committed against them, and would go a long way toward helping survivors recover and rebuild."

Thirty-two organizations, including groups focusing on domestic violence, fair housing, and legal services have previously endorsed this effort, including the American Civil Liberties Union, the National Alliance to End Sexual Violence, the National Network to End Domestic Violence, the National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty, and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

Safe, affordable housing plays a key role in helping to protect survivors of domestic and sexual assault. Too many survivors of sexual assault become homeless, leaving them even more vulnerable to sexual victimization and exploitation. Moreover, survivors often find themselves trapped in homes where they are further victimized by caregivers, parents, siblings, landlords, intimate partners, neighbors, or others in or near their home.

Read Senator Shaheen's press release at: **http://bit.ly/2orDvIi**

Read Senator Franken's press release at: **http://bit.ly/2oZxErs**

Representatives Introduce Legislation to Allow Taxpayers to Assist Homeless Veterans

Representatives Brad Schneider (D-IL), Tim Murphy (R-PA) and Ted Deutch (D-FL) introduced the "Homeless Veterans Assistance Fund Act of 2017" on April 4. The bipartisan bill is designed to help homeless veterans by providing an option for voluntary contributions to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) through a new "check-off box" on the annual federal tax return. The bill would make these funds available to the VA solely to provide services to homeless veterans, including developing and implementing new and innovative strategies to end veteran homelessness in consultation with the Departments of Labor and HUD.

"On any night in America, nearly 40,000 veterans are without a home," said Mr. Schneider. "It's unconscionable that men and women who served our country, and may still bear the physical and mental scars of that service, are forced to live on the streets. Giving Americans the option to divert a portion of their tax refund to aid homeless veterans is a small, commonsense step to make it easier to give back to those who sacrificed for us."

"A young American's decision to serve in our Armed Forces should not lead them into poverty and homelessness," said Mr. Deutch. "With this bill, the American people can help homeless veterans access the crucial services they need by donating directly to a fund overseen by Congress."

The legislation would require the president's annual budget request to outline proposed uses of the contributed funds and to notify Congress of any expenditures of the funds with 60 days' notice.

Read Mr. Schneider's press release at: **http://bit.ly/2oYxqnn**

Administration

OMB Requires Federal Agencies to Cut Workforce

Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Director Mick Mulvaney issued a memorandum requiring all federal agencies to begin taking immediate actions to achieve near-term workforce reductions and cost savings based on the President Donald Trump's FY18 Budget Blueprint. The memorandum also requires agencies to submit a high-level draft of an Agency Reform Plan by June 30, with a full plan by September, which includes workforce reductions over the next four years. Memorandum (M-17-22) dated April 12 provides guidance on fulfilling the requirements of President Trump's Executive Order 13781 from March 13 (see *Memo*, 3/20).

President Trump's Budget Blueprint would eliminate the HOME Investment Partnerships program, Community Development Block Grants, Choice Neighborhoods grants, and the Self Help Homeownership Opportunities Program. It would also require significant cuts to other HUD programs and end funding to the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness and NeighborWorks America (see *Memo*, 3/20).

When preparing an Agency Reform Plan, the memorandum instructs agencies to conduct an analysis that results in proposals to eliminate activities, restructure or merge activities, improve organizational efficiency and effectiveness, and maximize employee performance. The memorandum recommends eliminating activities that are not core to an agency's primary mission, that are "needlessly" redundant, or that are more appropriate for the private sector or state or local government.

Regarding restructuring or merging activities, the memorandum suggests improving coordination and information-sharing across silos within and between agencies. Regarding improving efficiency and effectiveness, the memorandum suggests shifting to alternate service delivery models, such as delegating responsibilities to state, local, and Tribal governments. Without funding to carry out these responsibilities, however, other levels of government are not likely to undertake them.

OMB will work with agencies to develop cross-cutting reform proposals that involve multiple agencies in order to address situations in which multiple agencies appear to interact in fragmented or duplicative ways with state, local, and Tribal governments or other stakeholders.

The memorandum requires government-wide management councils (CXOs) to identify policy and regulatory reporting requirements that are of low value, duplicative, or no longer necessary. In addition, OMB will identify reporting activities that could be immediately stopped or modified.

OMB will release a final, government-wide reform plan as part of the president's FY19 budget request.

Memorandum M-17-22 is at: http://bit.ly/2oXuCHn

HUD

HUD Hosts Listening Sessions on MTW Expansion Requirements

HUD will be hosting four in-person listening sessions to discuss a draft Operations notice outlining requirements for implementing the expansion of the Moving to Work (MTW) Demonstration. Although an email says the sessions are for public housing agencies (PHAs), HUD assures NLIHC that residents, resident leaders, and advocates are welcome to participate. The listening sessions will be in Newark, NJ on April 26; Washington, DC on April 28; Denver, CO on May 2; and Fort Worth, TX on May 4.

The "Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2016" authorized HUD to expand the MTW demonstration to an additional 100 high-performing PHAs over a seven-year period (see *Memo*, 12/21/15). PHAs will be added to the MTW demonstration in annual groups (cohorts), each of which will be overseen by a research advisory committee to ensure the demonstrations are evaluated with rigorous research protocols, quantitative analysis, and comparisons to control groups. Each year's cohort of MTW sites will be directed by HUD to test one specific policy change.

HUD published previews of a draft Operations notice and Notice PIH 2017-1 on January 19 that invited PHAs to apply to participate in the first cohort. Official publications were scheduled for January 23, but late in the afternoon on January 23, HUD sent an email stating that it was "revisiting the two notices" and "as a result, these notices will not be posted today." NLIHC described PIH 2017-1 based on the January 19 preview version (see *Memo*, 1/23). The Operations notice remained in the January 23 *Federal Register* with a comment period open until March 24, while PIH 2017-1 was never officially published. On February 24, HUD sent an email stating that it planned to publish a *Federal Register* notice announcing an update to the Operations notice with additional time for comment. As a result, many stakeholders have not submitted comments. The upcoming listening sessions will be based on the January 23 version of the Operations notice.

HUD describes the Operations notice as a framework for the MTW demonstration expansion that streamlines and simplifies oversight of participating PHAs while providing rigorous evaluation of specific policy changes. HUD is seeking to reduce the data collection and reporting requirements for expansion MTW PHAs while focusing on financial data, basic program monitoring and performance assessment, and an evaluation of the specific policy changes to be tested by each cohort.

The notice discusses three categories of statutory and regulatory waivers that MTW agencies could pursue:

1. General waivers would be available to all MTW expansion agencies without review by HUD. They could include:

    - Allowing up to 100% of the units in a property to have project-based vouchers (PBVs) if the additional units above the current statutory cap of 25% [the notice mistakenly has the cap at 20%] are for homeless, elderly, disabled, or veteran populations, or if the property is in a high opportunity area.
    - Creating an alternative Family Self-Sufficiency program.
    - Restructuring initial, annual, and interim income reviews.
    - Compensating landlords if there is significant tenant damage, and providing up to three months of lost payments due to vacancies.

2. Conditional waivers would be available if approved by HUD. The notice indicates that conditional waivers are expected to have a greater and more direct impact on households. They could include:

    - Creating minimum rents (not to exceed $250) that could go up to 50% of adjusted income.
    - Calculating rent as a percent of gross income, not to exceed 40% of gross income (27% for elderly or disabled households).
    - Allowing new voucher households to spend more than 40% of adjusted income at initial occupancy.
    - Creating "stepped rents" for voucher households that increases a household's rent payments on a fixed schedule until the household's voucher assistance becomes zero.
    - Creating "income bands" or ranges for public housing households for calculating rent based on adjusted income or flat rents within the bands. The notice declares that income bands may result in tenants paying more than 30% of adjusted income for rent and utilities.
    - Establishing work requirements (which could include substitutes for work). Services or referrals to services must be provided by the PHA. Work requirements could not apply to persons with a disability or to families that include someone with a disability, but people with disabilities could not be prevented from working.
    - Creating term limits no shorter than five years.
    - Establishing a voucher payment standard of up to 200% of Fair Market Rents.
    - Contributing MTW funds for the development of a Low Income Housing Tax Credit project.

3. Cohort-specific waivers would be available only to MTW agencies implementing a specific cohort policy change. At the time of selection to the MTW expansion, a PHA will be selected to test a specific policy change which is to be defined in a series of notices soliciting applications for participation in MTW, such as the withdrawn Notice PIH 2017-1.

NLIHC is concerned that the draft Operations notice places policy changes that could be most harmful to residents in the conditional waiver category, rather than the cohort-specific category. Time limits, work requirements, and rent reforms such as rents not based on household income (flat rents, tiered rents, stepped rents) should be rigorously tested only as part of a cohort, as was indicated in the withdrawn Notice PIH 2017-1.

Another concern is that neither the draft Operations notice nor the withdrawn PIH 2017-1 state that a PHA considering applying for MTW status should engage residents and the public through the PHA Plan Significant Amendment process, which requires input from the Resident Advisory Board (RAB) and a public review and comment period that includes a public hearing following extensive community outreach.

On a positive note, the draft Operations notice would require an expansion MTW agency to spend at least 90% of its annual voucher budget authority on eligible Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) expenses. This would prevent excessive diversion of voucher funds to so-called "eligible non-HAP expenses" such as providing services (which should be provided by other sources).

To effectively participate in the listening sessions, advocates should carefully read the Operations notice. Although PIH 2017-1 does not officially exist and it is likely to change, familiarity with its four proposed cohort topics would be helpful.

Register for listening sessions at:

- Newark, NJ - April 26, 2017
- Washington, DC - April 28, 2017
- Denver, CO - May 2, 2017
- Ft. Worth, TX - May 4, 2017

The draft Operations notice is at: http://bit.ly/2j3meSJ

The withdrawn preview copy of Notice PIH 2017-1 is at: http://bit.ly/2oXN6rf

Webinar on Final HUD Rule on Housing Counselor Certification, May 2

In collaboration with NLIHC, the HUD Office of Housing Counseling will present a webinar for NLIHC members on May 2 at 2:00 pm ET on the Final Rule on Housing Counselor Certification, which became effective on January 13, 2017. Housing counselor certification may affect your program even if you are not currently participating in the HUD Housing Counseling Program. This webinar will help you understand the housing counselor certification requirements and discuss options for meeting them. Register for the webinar at http://bit.ly/2naEmKt

If you provide housing counseling services under HUD programs like HOME, CDBG, Housing Choice Voucher Ownership Option or Family Self-Sufficiency, your program may be covered by the new housing counselor certification requirement. Housing counseling provided about HUD programs must be performed only by certified housing counselors who work for organizations approved to participate in HUD's Housing Counseling Program. This webinar will cover the definition of housing counseling, what is not housing counseling, the new certification/examination requirements, programs that are affected, and options for meeting the new certification standards.

More information on the Housing Counselor Certification final rule, with a list of HUD programs affected and FAQs, is at: http://bit.ly/2nGmH07

Research

Minimum Wage Increases Would Improve Housing Affordability and Increase Tax Revenue

A report by the Voorhees Center for Neighborhood and Community Improvement and the Labor Education Program at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, *The Impact of a Minimum Wage Increase on Housing Affordability in Illinois,* finds that a higher minimum wage would improve housing affordability, reduce enrollment in public assistance programs, and increase state and local tax revenues. An increase in the minimum wage would better enable low-wage workers to afford their housing, but affordable housing production would still be needed. An increase in the minimum wage will not reverse the trend of housing costs rising faster than incomes. In addition, low income seniors and people with disabilities not in the workforce would continue to face affordability challenges.

Using American Community Survey (ACS) Public Use Micro Sample (PUMS) data, the authors estimated the impact of a minimum wage increase on the number of cost-burdened low wage households, spending more than 30% of their income on housing. The authors estimated the following impacts given a hypothetical increase in Illinois' minimum wage to $10, $13, and $15 per hour.

Statewide Change in Housing Cost-Burdened Households with a Low Wage Worker											
Min. Wage Increase to $10				**Min. Wage Increase to $13**				**Min. Wage Increase to $15**			
Owners		Renters		Owners		Renters		Owners		Renters	
#	% Change	#	% Change	#	% Change	#	% Change	#	% Change	#	% Change
-17,011	-5%	-32,615	-10%	-37,393	-7%	-77,504	-17%	-56,624	-8%	-114,151	-21%

All three scenarios would reduce the number of cost-burdened renter and owner households. The authors noted that higher minimum wages would not eliminate the need for housing subsidies among low income seniors and people with disabilities who are unable to work.

The authors predicted that fewer low-wage workers would rely on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Medicaid if the state increased the minimum wage. The authors also highlighted that 27% of Illinois households receiving housing assistance through HUD programs derive a significant portion of their income from work. Minimum wage increases could make some of these households ineligible for assistance. The authors caution that a higher wage might not result in a net benefit to the household losing assistance if its new earnings do not keep pace with housing costs.

The authors also estimated the potential employment and tax revenue impact of minimum wage increases. They projected that a $13 minimum wage would result in a 0.22% decline in employment in the Chicago area, while a $15 minimum wage would lead to a 0.67% gain. For the state, an increase to a $10, $13, or $15 minimum wage would result in a decrease in employment by 1.41%, 0.89%, or 0.78%, respectively. At the same time, the authors estimated that statewide minimum wage increases to $10, $13, or $15 per hour would result in additional state and local tax revenues of $554 million, $1.55 billion, or $2.35 billion, respectively.

Given that an increase in the minimum wage would have beneficial impacts on housing affordability, public assistance, and tax revenues and limited impact on employment, the report recommends the state enact a baseline minimum wage of at least $10 per hour. The report goes on to recommend higher minimum wages for higher-cost regions like the Chicago metropolitan region, for which they recommend a $15 minimum wage "implemented gradually in tandem with increases already planned for the City of Chicago."

The Impact of a Minimum Wage Increase on Housing Affordability in Illinois is available at: http://bit.ly/2o2fQKF

HUD Releases New LIHTC Tenant Data

HUD released *Understanding Whom the LIHTC Program Serves: Data on Tenants in LIHTC Units as of December 31, 2014.* The report provides information on the income, race, disability status, and family composition of tenants living in Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC)-assisted housing. HUD has required state agencies that administer the LIHTC program to submit demographic and economic data on tenants since the passage of the Housing and Economic Recovery Act (HERA) in 2008.

The median annual income of households living in LIHTC housing was $17,152, ranging from $5,492 in Puerto Rico to $32,965 in Alaska. Approximately 47.4% of LIHTC households were extremely low income, reporting incomes at or below 30% the Area Median Gross Income (AMGI). To help with rental payments, 37.8% of households in LIHTC housing reported receiving some form of additional rental assistance, though HUD was only able to collect data on the use of rental assistance from 69.5% of LIHTC properties.

The report indicates that 38.7% of all LIHTC households spent more than 30% of their income on rent, making them housing cost-burdened. Approximately 9.5% of all LIHTC households spent more than 50% of their income on housing, making them severely housing cost-burdened.

The report also presents data on the race and ethnicity of heads of households. Under fair housing laws, however, tenants are not required to share this information. Forty-one percent of households did not report the race or ethnicity of the head of household. Of the data collected, 22.8% heads of household were white, 23.1% were black/African America, and 2.0% were Asian. Approximately 2.4% of heads of households were American Indian or Alaskan Native, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, or other (including multiple race). About 9.3% of heads of households reported Hispanic as their ethnicity.

In terms of disability status, 9.5% of households included at least one member with a disability. Approximately 25.8% of households had at least one member 62 years of age or older and 28.3% of households had at least one member under the age of 18.

Understanding Whom the LIHTC Program Serves: Tenants in LIHTC Units as of December 31, 2014 is available at: http://bit.ly/2oam77T

HUD Releases FY17 Income Limits

HUD released the FY17 median family income (MFI) estimates and income limits on April 14. The estimated FY17 MFI for the U.S. is $68,000, which represents a 3.5% increase from the estimated FY16 MFI of $65,700.

HUD uses MFIs to determine income eligibility for households applying for the Public Housing, Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher, Section 202 Housing for the Elderly, and Section 811 Housing for Persons with Disabilities programs. The MFIs are also used to determine income eligibility for programs run by the Department of the Treasury, the Department of Agriculture, and the Federal Housing Finance Agency.

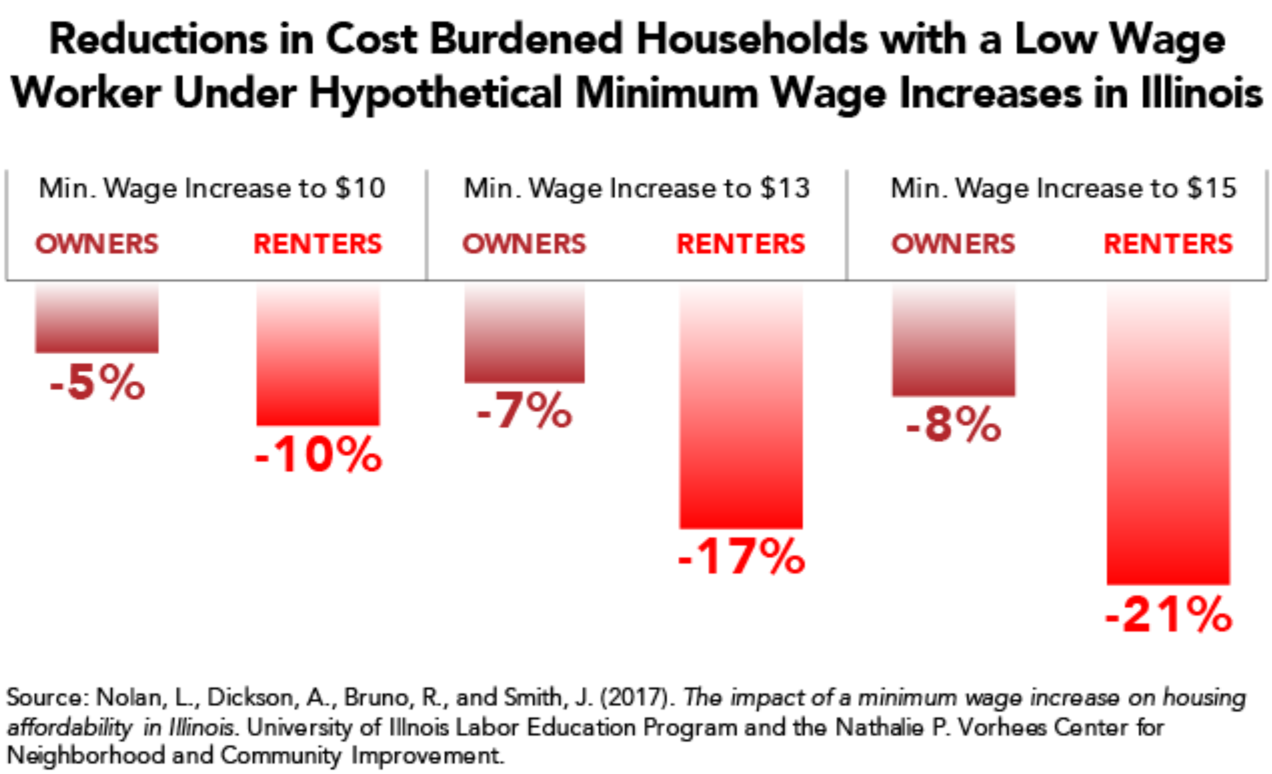
HUD calculates the FY17 MFIs using 2010-2014 five-year American Community Survey (ACS) and Puerto Rico Community Survey (PRCS) data. HUD uses the 2014 one-year ACS survey where it is valid.

Income limits are based on MFIs adjusted for family size. Very low income (VLI) limits for four-person families are calculated as 50% of the area median family income, with adjustments for high and low cost areas. Extremely low income (ELI) families are defined as those whose incomes do not exceed the greater of either 30% of the MFI (or 60% of VLI income limit) or the federal poverty guideline published by the Department of Health and Human Services. If the federal poverty guideline is above the VLI limit for a given family size, the ELI limit is set at the VLI limit.

The FY17 Income Limits documentation and more information are available at: http://bit.ly/2oyWrEw

Fact of The Week

How Minimum Wage Increases Would Reduce Housing Cost Burdens in Illinois



Source: Nolan, L., Dickson, A., Bruno, R., and Smith, J.(2017). *The impact of a minimum wage increase on housing affordability in Illinois.* University of Illinois Labor Education Program and the Nathalie P. Vorhees Center for Neighborhood and Community Improvement.

From the Field

Advocates Win $2.5 Billion for Housing and Homelessness in NY State Budget

Governor Andrew Cuomo (D) and leaders of the New York State Assembly agreed on April 7 to a budget for the state's fiscal year 2017-18, which began on April 1, that includes a total of $2.5 billion over five years for the construction and rehabilitation of 6,000 units of supportive housing and 100,000 units in other statewide affordable housing programs. The budget was a major win for New York affordable housing advocates.

Within the $2.5 billion allotment is $1.97 billion that was appropriated but not allocated in last year's budget. The $1.97 billion derives from a commitment Mr. Cuomo made during his 2016 State of the State address, in which he pledged support for a 5-year, $2 billion plan to address the state's affordable housing and homelessness needs by building 20,000 units of supportive housing (see *Memo* 1/19/16). The 2016-17 state budget included an appropriation of the full $2 billion, but only $150 million was made available (see *Memo* 7/11/16). In order to access the balance of the $2 billion, the executive branch and state legislative leaders needed to negotiate a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for how the money would be spent. The additional funding went idle when elected officials reached a stalemate over the terms of the MOU and adjourned the State Assembly in July, 2016.

This month's commitment marks the culmination of a three-year advocacy campaign by the Campaign 4 NY/NY Housing, a coalition of organizations led in part by the Supportive Housing Network of New York (the Network), a NLIHC state partner. The Campaign was dedicated to persuading Mr. Cuomo, New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio (D), and state legislators to commit to the creation of 35,000 units of supportive housing in the state. The sustained effort garnered the support of 350 nonprofit organizations statewide, including 230 faith leaders, and 75% of the New York State Assembly and State Senate, and generated more than 150 press mentions throughout the state over the past two years. As a result of the Campaign, in November 2015, Mr. de Blasio committed the City to funding 15,000 units of supportive housing over the next 15 years, known as the NYC 15/15 plan, and Mr. Cuomo subsequently made his 2016 State of the State commitment. The budget approved on April 7 represents the crowning achievement of the Campaign's efforts.

"The Supportive Housing Network of New York and our 200 members across the state are elated about today's announcement," said Network Executive Director Laura Mascuch. "We are deeply grateful to Governor Cuomo, Senate Majority Leader Flanagan and Assembly Speaker Heastie for this visionary and judicious investment and for the hard work that went into the process. Today's actions cement New York's well-earned reputation for inventing and bringing to scale innovative models that provide the most vulnerable people among us the opportunity for a home, health, and a life of dignity. We truly appreciate the dedicated members and staff who made this crucial goal a reality."

"The Assembly Majority is committed to helping every family in New York secure affordable housing," said New York State Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie (D-Bronx) in a press release. "Our budget enacts a five-year spending plan that helps close some of the gaps that leave New Yorkers vulnerable and ensures meaningful steps towards addressing the affordable housing crisis in our state."

Details on how housing and homelessness funding in the 2017-18 state budget will be allocated are available on the Network's blog at: http://bit.ly/2pyvVsB

For more information, contact Steve Piasecki at spiasecki@shnny.org.

Resources

National Rural Housing Coalition Releases Report on Nonprofit Organizations' Impact in Rural America

The National Rural Housing Coalition released its 2017 impact report, *Measuring the Economic and Human Impact of Nonprofit Organizations in Rural America*, providing information and data to policy makers and the public on the impact nonprofit housing organizations have on their communities.

Nonprofit organizations play a key role in meeting the economic and housing needs of rural communities. These organizations assist communities in planning, developing, financing, and constructing single-family and multi-family housing, water and wastewater systems, and community facilities.

Based on a survey of 104 NRHC nonprofit members, the report estimates these organizations helped low income families and rural communities secure $1 billion in financing to build, purchase, preserve, or rehabilitate more than 6,500 affordable homes and improve access to water and sewer systems for nearly 140,000 families in FY16. These activities led to the creation of nearly 14,000 jobs, generated nearly $820 million in income, and increased tax revenues by $442 million.

The report also highlights the role of key federal housing programs in financing affordable homes in rural areas. The direct loan and loan guarantee programs at the U.S. Department of Agriculture comprised the largest share (45%) of total financing for affordable homeownership, followed by mortgages secured through the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Federal Housing Finance Agency (25%). Just 14% of homeownership financing was secured through conventional lending.

The largest share of financing for rural rental housing was the Low Income Housing Tax Credit (Housing Credit) at 44%, followed by direct and guaranteed rental loan programs at USDA at 22%. HUD resources accounted for less than 3% of the total rural rental housing financing.

Read the report at: **http://bit.ly/2o06nTW**

PRRAC Updates Compendium of State and Local Laws Barring Source-of-Income Discrimination

The Policy & Race Research Action Council updates annually its compilation of state and local laws prohibiting discrimination in the housing market based on source of income. These laws protect households who rely on such sources of income as Housing Choice Vouchers and Supplemental Security Income to pay their rent—preventing landlords from denying, evicting, or treating them unfairly on that basis. The document also explains that authorizing statutes for the Low Income Housing Tax Credit and HOME programs provide source-of-income protections. The interim regulations for the national Housing Trust Fund also provide this protection.

The April 2017 update is available as Appendix B at: http://bit.ly/249rQIr

Western Center on Law and Poverty Releases Affordable Housing Advocacy Manual

The Western Center on Law and Poverty released *Affordable Housing Manual*, a free, easy-to-understand, comprehensive compendium of tools for advocates seeking to increase the supply of affordable housing. It is designed for housing advocates, grassroots organizers, and community members. Although it contains some California-specific information, it will be useful to advocates everywhere.

In addition to discussing the advocate's role in planning processes and advocacy strategies, the manual has chapters on using the Census Bureau's webpage and federal planning documents such as the Consolidated Plan, Public Housing Agency Plans, and Section 3 Plans. Fourteen appendices include a sample Community Benefits Agreement, a sample Citizen Participation Plan, and a housing and land-use glossary.

Affordable Housing Manual, written by long-time advocates Lynn Martinez, Madeline Howard, and others, is available at: http://bit.ly/2obSSkh

Events

Webinar on Impact of President's Budget on Communities and How to Resist, April 19

The Center for Community Change and the National Priorities Project will hold a webinar titled "Protecting Our Communities: A Community Guide to Resisting the President's Budget" on Wednesday, April 19 at 2 pm ET.

The webinar will discuss:

- Experiences of sustained divestment in communities and the need for government to value families trying to make ends meet rather than to target and control communities.
- Where federal money goes and where it comes from, and who makes the decisions and how.
- How the president's proposals for militarization, from policing to the Pentagon, immigration enforcement, and cuts to jobs, education, housing, and health would be felt by communities around the country.
- Tools and resources (i.e., sample op-eds, press releases, and fact sheets) that can assist in engaging with local elected officials and the media.

Using National Priorities Project's online tools, the webinar will show in real time how the president's proposals would affect your state or city, and what a values-driven, responsible budget alternative would look like.

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

Pre-Event Registration Deadline Approaching for NTI in Minneapolis, May 22-26

May 1 is the pre-event registration deadline for the NeighborWorks Training Institute (NTI) taking place May 22-26 in Minneapolis, MN. The NTI offers more than 100 course offerings in affordable housing development and financing; housing asset management; community engagement; community revitalization; community economic development; housing construction and rehabilitation; financial capability and homeownership education, coaching, and counseling; nonprofit management and leadership; and single-family and small business lending.

More information about the NTI is at: http://bit.ly/1Zx8Ima

Register for the NTI at: http://bit.ly/1ATs8Ia

Other NLIHC News

NLIHC Welcomes 79 New Members in First Quarter 2017

Welcome to the following organizations and individuals who joined the National Low Income Housing Coalition in the first quarter of 2017. We thank you for your support of NLIHC and for your commitment to ending homelessness and housing poverty in the U.S.

New Organizational Members:

- Avenue Community Development Corporation, Houston, TX
- California Renters Legal Advocacy, San Francisco, CA
- Fred Samuel Resident Association, New York, NY
- Gladwin City Housing Commission, Gladwin, MI
- Great Lakes Community Development, Detroit, MI
- Grounded Solutions Network, Portland, OR
- H.O.P.E. through Divine Intervention, Atlanta, GA
- Habitat for Humanity of South Hampton Roads, Norfolk, VA
- Home Is The Foundation, Eaton, OH
- Housing Trust of Rutland County, Inc., Rutland, VT
- Martindale Brightwood Community Development Corporation, Indianapolis, IN
- Meyer Memorial Trust, Portland, OR
- Neighborhoods of Battle Creek, Battle Creek, MI
- New York Housing Conference, New York, NY
- NYS Rural Advocates, Cambridge, NY
- Oglala Sioux Lakota Housing, Pine Ridge, SD
- Oklahoma Coalition for Affordable Housing, Oklahoma City, OK
- Path Ventures, Los Angeles, CA
- Statewide Independent Living Council of Georgia, Decatur, GA
- Town of Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill, NC
- Tulsa Pythian Manor Tenant Association, Tulsa, OK

New Individual Members:

- Diane Alecusan, Columbus, OH
- Doris Anderson, Maidens, VA
- Lisa Anderson, Rio Rancho, NM
- Daniel Andino, Sinking Spring, PA
- Lauren Asplen, Washington, DC
- Bonita Behun, Sebastopol, CA
- Harold Berk, Ambler, PA
- Nancy Burse, Detroit, MI
- Mary Butler, Elyria, OH
- Tiffany Chambliss, New York, NY
- James Chud, Los Angeles, CA
- Ashley Coates, Moraga, CA
- Dee Davis, Detroit, MI
- Joanna Farmer, Kansas City, MO
- Caterina Fava, Washington, DC
- Yvette Fisher, Waldorf, MD
- Andrea Frymire, Oklahoma City, OK
- Dave Fulford, Selma, AL
- Mark Gordon, Salt Lake City, UT
- Catherine Greve, Glen Rock, NJ
- Dakarai Griffan, New York, NY
- Jessica Hanmer, Washington, DC
- Matt Hauge, Des Moines, IA
- Lori Hughes, Mercer Island, WA
- Rhondajay Jackson-Johnson, Dover, DE

- Paul Jargowsky, Mountain View, CA
- Yvonne Jefferson, New Smyrna Beach, FL
- Deborah Jenkins, Edmond, OK
- Jacqueline Johnson, Belleville, IL
- Peter Kaplan, Pittsburgh, PA
- Tiffany Kelly, Winter Garden, FL
- Martha Knisley, Boone, NC
- David Long-Higgins, Canal Winchester, OH
- Jana Lynch, Alexandria, VA
- Carol Ridge Martinez, Allston, MA
- Frank Martinez, Dallas, TX
- Marva Mauthe, Fort Collins, CO
- William Mauthe, Fort Collins, CO
- Gloria McCormick, Belleville, IL
- Bill Minkle, Worcester, MA
- William Minor, Selma, AL
- Griffin Moore, Washington, DC
- Angel Morales, San Francisco, CA
- Don Oglesby, Greenville, SC
- Pamela Phillips-Anderson, Bronx, NY
- Daniella Pierre, Miami, FL
- Phebe Quattrucci, South Freeport, ME
- Wynn Radford III, Hopkinsville, KY
- Michael Schultz, Marlton, NJ
- Tracy Snipes, Suffolk, VA
- Paul Sussman, San Francisco, CA

- Michael Sydlik, San Francisco, CA
- Kathryn Thompson, Dallas, TX
- Trevell Valentine, San Francisco, CA
- Courtney Welch, San Diego, CA
- Dana Williams, Clifton, NJ
- Tonja Williams, Country Club Hills, IL
- Travis Young, State College, PA

NLIHC in the News

NLIHC in the News for the Week of April 9

The following are some of the news stories that NLIHC contributed to during the week of April 9:

- "Ben Carson getting stuck in a public housing elevator shows how much work he needs to do," *Mic*, April 12 at: http://bit.ly/2ouGfT4
- "A new approach to housing Las Vegas's homeless," *Curbed*, April 12 at: http://bit.ly/2ocnXoQ
- "Q&A: Dr. Ben Carson Tackles HUD Budget Cut Concerns," *CBS Miami*, April 11 at: http://cbsloc.al/2pizGTE
- "2-1-1 calls illuminate Norwalk's affordable housing crisis," *San Antonio Express-News*, April 8 at: http://bit.ly/2ofatb4

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Paul Kealey, Chief Operating Officer, x232
Hannah Keith, Communications and Graphic Design Intern, x250
Joseph Lindstrom, Manager, Field Organizing, x222
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Elayne Weiss, Senior Housing Policy Analyst, x243

Renee Willis, Vice President for Field and Communications, x247
Diane Yentel, President and CEO, x228