



Memo TO Members

Volume 21, Issue 30

August 1, 2016

In This Issue:

NATIONAL HOUSING TRUST FUND

- Webinar on Financing and Operating Affordable Housing for Extremely Low Income Households
- Key Upcoming Dates Related to States' HTF Allocation Plans

CONGRESS

- Speaker Ryan Challenges Fellow Republicans to Address Poverty
- NLIHC Joins Make Room's National Campaign

HUD

- CoCs Urged to Fund Full Range of Projects Serving People Fleeing Domestic Violence

RESEARCH

- PAHRC Releases Annual Report: "Housing is a Foundation"

FACT OF THE WEEK

- The Shrinking Public Housing Stock (1996-2015)

HOUSING AND ELECTIONS

- Participate in National Voter Registration Day

RESOURCES

- Recommendations for Serving Homeless Individuals and Families in Disasters
- New Online Tool Explores Affordable Rental Housing Development Costs
- Small Area Fair Market Rents Tele-Briefing Slides and Audio Available
- TAC Updates "Section 8 Made Simple"

FROM THE FIELD

- \$50 Million Housing Opportunity Bond Included in Rhode Island State Budget

NLIHC NEWS

- NLIHC Accepting Applications for Fall Internships

National Housing Trust Fund

Webinar on Financing and Operating Affordable Housing for Extremely Low Income Households

NLIHC will host a webinar for advocates and developers on Monday, August 15 at 12:30 pm ET on options and considerations related to financing and operating affordable housing for extremely low income (ELI) households - those with incomes at or below 30% of the area median income.

Developing rental units affordable to ELI households without relying on vouchers can be very challenging. NLIHC's national Housing Trust Fund (HTF) Developer Advisory Group recently published two briefs on strategies for funding ELI housing and on options and considerations related to using operating assistance and operating assistance reserves for HTF projects to achieve 30-year ELI affordability without depending on vouchers.

NLIHC's Ed Gramlich and Paul Kealey will provide an overview of the Advisory Group's papers. Former Homes for America President and CEO Nancy Rase and Community Frameworks Senior Housing and Community Developer Ginger Segel, both members of the HTF Developer Advisory Group, will be on hand to share reflections and answer questions.

HTF requires that at least 80% of a state's allocation must be used to produce, rehabilitate, or preserve rental housing, that 100% of a state's allocation in 2016 must benefit ELI households, and that HTF-assisted units must remain affordable for at least 30 years. Learn how this can be accomplished and what the pitfalls are.

Register for this webinar at: <http://bit.ly/29YREE0>

For accessibility accommodations, contact James Saucedo at jsaucedo@nlihc.org or 202-507-7452.

Key Upcoming Dates Related to States' HTF Allocation Plans

NLIHC provides state-specific information related to their national Housing Trust Fund (HTF) allocation plans. The state resources can be found at: <http://bit.ly/28SEBVd>. These state pages are updated regularly. We also provide a calendar of the dates, times and locations of upcoming public hearings as well as public comment period deadlines announced by the State Designated Entities administering the HTF program.

Below is a list of notable events August 1 through August 5.

Monday, August 1

- Montana: Deadline for public comments on draft HTF allocation plan.
- Ohio: Deadline for public comments on draft HTF allocation plan.

Thursday, August 4

- Oklahoma: Informal public input session on drafting an HTF allocation plan. 100 Northwest 63rd Street, Will Rogers Room, Oklahoma City, OK 73116. 9:30am, CT.

Friday, August 5

- Maine: Deadline for public comments on draft HTF allocation plan.

- Virginia: Deadline for public comments on draft HTF allocation plan.

Congress

Speaker Ryan Challenges Fellow Republicans to Address Poverty

In a six-part Opportunity Lives online documentary series titled “Comeback” released last week, Speaker of the House Paul Ryan (R-WI) challenged his Republican colleagues to do more to tackle poverty in America.

Opportunity Lives is affiliated with the Kemp Forum, an anti-poverty summit sponsored by the Jack Kemp Foundation and co-hosted by Mr. Ryan and Republican Senator Tim Scott (R-SC) earlier this year.

In one scene of the documentary, Mr. Ryan calls on fellow Republicans to join the fight against poverty at a community meeting in Dallas with Representative Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-TX). Mr. Ryan says, “Eddie and I have known each other for a long time. We play on different teams, but we’ve got the same goals and one team, in my case, hasn’t been on the field enough lately.”

Mr. Ryan led a House Republican Task Force on Poverty, Opportunity, and Upward Mobility to develop an anti-poverty plan that was released in June (see *Memo*, [6/13](#)) to serve as a blueprint for reforming America’s welfare, workforce, and education programs, including affordable housing and community development programs. The plan focused on imposing work requirements on beneficiaries of federal housing assistance, demanding evidence-based outcomes, and providing states with more flexibility. NLIHC President and CEO Diane Yentel released a [statement](#) highlighting several concerns with the proposal, but welcomed a national conversation on solutions to end poverty.

“Poverty in America isn’t going away,” Mr. Ryan said in a statement. “We may not read about it in the headlines every day, but it's still persistent across our country and we need to confront it head on.”

Read more at: <http://bit.ly/2ackYXv>

NLIHC Joins Make Room’s National Campaign

NLIHC and the Campaign for Housing and Community Development Funding (CHCDF), a group of more than 70 national organizations that educates and advocates for adequate federal funding for affordable housing and community development programs, are joining the Make Room campaign’s national effort to send 1 million messages to Congress about the critical need to end housing insecurity in America.

Between August 1 and the November election, organizations across the nation will share a common message: our nation is facing a housing affordability crisis of record proportions that demands Congressional leadership. NLIHC encourages all concerned individuals and national, state, and local organizations to join the campaign.

Make Room is hosting a campaign kickoff call today, August 1 at 4:00pm EST. Matthew Desmond, bestselling author of the book *Evicted*, will open the call, and Ali Solis, Enterprise Community Partners and Angela Boyd, Make Room campaign, will overview the campaign and ways advocates can get involved. Diane Yentel, NLIHC president and CEO, will give brief concluding remarks. [RSVP for the event here](#) and please share information about today’s call widely with other national, state, and local organizations. Make Room also will feature a national sign-on letter and an advocacy toolkit on their website.

Make Room is a partnership between Enterprise Community Partners, MacArthur Foundation, Ford Foundation, CohnReznick LLP, and others to “give voice to struggling renters and elevate rental housing on the

agendas of our nation's leaders. . . , [to advocate] for better policies, and [to tell] the stories of real families who can't make rent today.”

For more details about Make Room and the campaign, see [Make Room's website](#).

HUD

CoCs Urged to Fund Full Range of Projects Serving People Fleeing Domestic Violence

HUD Deputy Assistant Secretary for Special Needs Ann Marie Oliva issued a “SNAPS in Focus” message on July 25. Ms. Oliva stated that an array of projects serving people fleeing domestic violence are critical to a comprehensive homeless services system “regardless of component type.” She wrote that each component type - transitional housing, rapid re-housing, and permanent supportive housing for survivors - can and should have a place in a community's system.

As Continuums of Care (CoCs) make local funding decisions related to the FY16 CoC Program Competition, Ms. Oliva urged them to engage local victim service providers to ensure a balanced approach that considers each of the component types. She also listed a number of issues for CoCs to consider when making local decisions, such as:

- Geographic coverage, particularly in rural areas;
- Program outcomes, recognizing that survivors often need longer timeframes to gain stability and move to permanent housing;
- Program design, such as trauma-informed practices and a housing-first orientation;
- Maintaining the same number of units when reallocating resources from a low-performing project to another project.

“SNAPS in Focus” is at <http://bit.ly/2a4BAit>

Research

PAHRC Releases Annual Report: “Housing is a Foundation”

The Public and Affordable Housing Research Corporation (PAHRC) released its third annual research report titled *2016 PAHRC Report: Housing is a Foundation*. The report finds that vulnerable populations significantly benefit from federal rental assistance paired with services. However, federal funding for housing assistance and services is in decline. The authors conclude that there is a critical need to expand funding for rental assistance and connect it to supportive services.

Federal rental assistance programs serve more than 16 million people, including approximately 6 million children, 2 million seniors, and 3 million people with disabilities. Each of these populations have needs for services. Children could benefit from greater educational supports, and seniors could benefit from health services and accessible features integrated into their housing. Seniors and people with disabilities can live independently and as part of the community as a result of rental assistance, accessible features integrated into their housing, and supportive services.

The authors found a growing demand for these resources but shrinking or stagnating funding for them. Approximately 19 million families in the U.S. potentially qualify for federal rental assistance, but only 7.3 million families actually receive it. The situation is worst for those with the lowest incomes. For extremely low

income (ELI) renter households, those earning 30% or less of the area median income, there are only 28 affordable units available for every 100 ELI renter households. Twenty-three of those units are subsidized. Seventy-five percent of ELI renter households are paying more than half of their income on rent and utilities, making them severely cost-burdened.

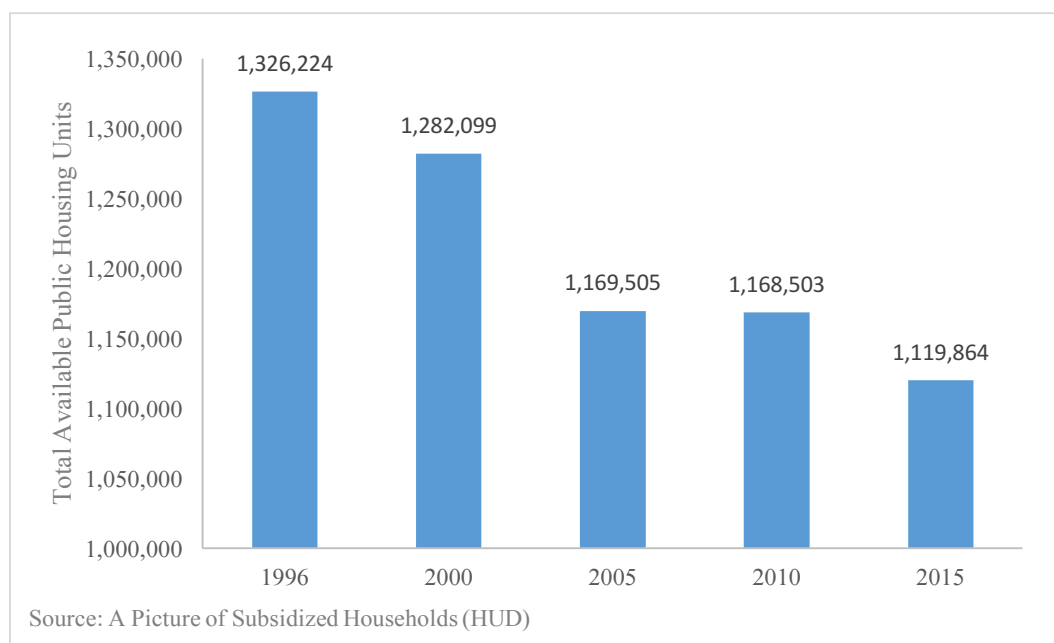
Essential rental assistance programs like public housing and project-based rental assistance (PBRA) are shrinking. Chronic underfunding for capital and operating needs has contributed to the loss of over 200,000 public housing units since 1996. Since 1992, 346,000 PBRA units have been lost due to expiring landlord contracts.

The report concludes with a series of prescriptions to strengthen affordable housing and services for low income households. These prescriptions include: preserving the affordable housing stock, developing new affordable units, expanding tenant-based rental assistance, and linking assisted housing to supportive services. According to the authors, “providing more resources to expand the supply of rental assistance and connect rental assistance to other services should be a critical policy priority, which will result in highly successful returns.”

2016 PAHRC Report: Housing is a Foundation is available at: <http://bit.ly/2abc5g7>

Fact of the Week

The Shrinking Public Housing Stock (1996-2015)



Housing and Elections

Participate in National Voter Registration Day

High voter turnout among low income renters and their allies will be critically important to making affordable housing a priority for both the next President and the new Congress. As Election Day approaches, NLIHC urges housing organizations to engage in voter registration and voter education efforts and to participate in National Voter Registration Day on Tuesday, September 27. This coordinated day of events involves volunteers and organizations throughout the country hosting events and canvassing neighborhoods to engage new voters and to update registration records. The event takes place before registration deadlines in any state.

National Voter Registration Day partners can receive branded posters, stickers, and other materials to promote events and recruit volunteers. The National Voter Registration Day website features a directory of all planned events so that future voters and those interested in volunteering can find nearby events. Partners should add their events to the directory. National Voter Registration Day coordinators can also provide support with communications and social media to promote local events. NLIHC is a National Partner for National Voter Registration Day.

Just 26% of renters voted in 2014, far below the 49% of homeowners who voted. The disparity in voter participation by income levels is even more striking. While 75% of people with incomes over \$100,000 were registered to vote in 2014 and 53% voted, just 48% of people with incomes below \$20,000 were registered, and only 26% turned out to the polls. Closing these gaps could make a significant impact toward achieving a more just distribution of federal housing resources.

NLIHC has produced materials to help advocates and residents develop their own voter engagement activities. To participate in NLIHC Voterization activities, contact NLIHC's Field Team at: outreach@nlihc.org

To participate as a National Voter Registration Day partner in your community, go to: <http://www.nationalvoterregistrationday.org>

Resources

Recommendations for Serving Homeless Individuals and Families in Disasters

A report released by HUD titled *Send Red, Not Blue: The Homeless Resident* provides recommendations to improve coordination between homeless services providers, disaster preparedness planners, and homeless residents in preparing for, responding to, and recovering from disasters. Emergency planning and services geared toward the general population may not meet the needs of homeless individuals and families, who are particularly vulnerable during disasters. The recommendations are drawn from data gathered through a literature review, key informant interviews, and focus groups conducted with homeless residents and service providers in Hillsborough and Pinellas counties in Florida. These counties have extensive experience with hurricanes and disaster response.

Send Red, Not Blue: The Homeless Resident is available at: <http://bit.ly/2asmyrB>

New Online Tool Explores Affordable Rental Housing Development Costs

The Urban Institute and the National Housing Conference partnered to create a new interactive online tool, *The cost of affordable housing: Does it pencil out?*, that allows users to explore the costs of developing affordable rental housing. Users can manipulate different options in a hypothetical development serving low income households. The options include tenant income levels and rent burden, replacement reserves, debt size, construction costs, and operating expenses, to name a few. The tool illustrates the significant gap between the rents that low income households can afford and the costs of building and maintaining rental housing. The tool demonstrates the necessity of public subsidies for building, preserving, and operating affordable rental housing for the lowest income households.

The cost of affordable housing: Does it pencil out? is available at <http://urbn.is/2af0aQZ>

Washington Post reporter Emily Badger highlighted the tool's finding in a wonkblog excerpt entitled, '[The basic reason why there just isn't enough decent housing for the poor.](#)' In a Letter to the Editor, Diane Yentel, president and CEO of NLIHC responded with, "[How to provide housing for the neediest.](#)"

Small Area Fair Market Rents Tele-Briefing Slides and Audio Available

Slides and an audio recording are available from a tele-briefing advocates conducted on July 25 about HUD's proposal to require public housing agencies (PHAs) in certain areas to use ZIP-code-based Small Area Fair Market Rents (SAFMRs) in the Housing Choice Voucher program (see *Memo*, [6/20](#)). The National Fair Housing Alliance (NFHA) hosted the tele-briefing, with participation by NLIHC, the Poverty & Race Research Action Council (PRRAC), the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP), and the National Community Reinvestment Coalition (NCRC). Each of the organizations strongly support the implementation of SAFMRs, which are intended to reduce concentrations of vouchers in low income areas and better enable voucher households to use vouchers in higher-cost rental markets where there might be better schools, less crime, and fewer environmental hazards.

Debby Goldberg from NFHA moderated the tele-briefing. Barbara Sard from CBPP provided a brief overview of how FMRs affect voucher subsidies, and Amber Lee from NCRC explained the key features of the proposed Small Area FMR rule.

While the presenters support SAFMRs, they also highlighted concerns and urged adjustments be made to some features of the proposed rule. NLIHC's Ed Gramlich raised concerns about the likely impact on households currently using a voucher if the SAFMR in their ZIP code declines, resulting in a lower voucher payment standard. If their landlords do not lower the rent when payment standards are reduced, voucher households' rents could increase, causing them to spend more than 30% of their income for rent and utilities. Other landlords might decide to exit the program if they think they can obtain pre-SAFMR rents from households who do not need vouchers, leading to displacement of low income households. The presenters shared various possible solutions to these concerns.

Another concern relates to the formula HUD proposes to use to determine which PHAs must comply with the SAFMR rule. As proposed, PHAs in 31 metropolitan areas would be required to comply. Advocates in some of these areas, such as New York City and Oakland California, fear that many voucher households could be displaced, with few places to move to due to very low vacancy rates. Another concern with the formula is that many metropolitan areas with higher concentrations of vouchers in low income areas of racial and ethnic communities are not among the 31 SAFMR areas. Phil Tegeler from PRRAC and Barbara Sard from CBPP discussed this issue and offered suggestions that could improve the formula's effectiveness.

The tele-briefing is available at: <https://youtu.be/WpdZ-gn7ogM>

TAC Updates "Section 8 Made Simple"

The Technical Assistance Collaborative (TAC) has updated the useful and easy-to-read guidebook, *Section 8 Made Simple*. The update has new tips and information on how to navigate the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program, and adds a new focus on helping those who are experiencing chronic homelessness. Like the original, the updated *Section 8 Made Simple* explains how to use fair housing law and federal guidance to make the HCV program accessible to people with disabilities.

Section 8 Made Simple-Special Edition is available for free at <http://bit.ly/2abwS81>, where individual chapters or the entire guidebook can be downloaded.

From the Field

\$50 Million Housing Opportunity Bond Included in Rhode Island State Budget

Rhode Island housing advocates are celebrating a significant victory this month following the passage of a \$50 million Housing Opportunity Bond initiative for housing programs in the state. The initiative passed both

chambers of the Rhode Island General Assembly and was signed into law by Governor Gina Raimondo (D) as part of an omnibus statewide budget package.

Housing advocates in the state, led by the Housing Network of Rhode Island and the Rhode Island Coalition for the Homeless, both NLIHC state partner organizations, prioritized the bond initiative in their state legislative advocacy this year. In advocating for this year's housing bond initiative, advocates pointed to the success of previous bond initiatives for funding statewide housing programs, as well as the significant need for statewide investment in affordable housing programs. A similar \$50 million Housing Opportunity Bond initiative passed a statewide ballot vote in 2006, and a \$25 million bond passed in 2012.

Initially Governor Raimondo called for a \$40 million housing bond initiative in her statewide budget proposal this year, which was met with a call by housing advocates for an increase to \$100 million. State Senator Juan Pichardo (D-Providence) and State Representative Scott Slater (D-Providence), two champions for housing in the State Legislature, introduced legislation to increase the bond initiative to \$100 million. Though in the final bill advocates did not receive the full \$100 million they sought, the passage of this year's \$50 million initiative by statewide elected officials marks a significant state investment in affordable housing development in Rhode Island.

"We are grateful to the General Assembly and the Governor for their leadership," said LeeAnn Byrne, Policy Director at the Rhode Island Coalition for the Homeless. "They understand that this investment in housing shows their understanding of its importance in the State's economic development. We also thank our partners for clearly communicating this message, and for their commitment to our most vulnerable Rhode Islanders experiencing homelessness and housing insecurity."

The bond initiative now heads to the November ballot. A broad coalition of housing advocates and advocates representing other social justice issue areas will campaign in support of the bond initiative.

For more information, contact LeeAnn Byrne at leeann@rihomeless.org.

NLIHC News

NLIHC Accepting Applications for Fall Internships

NLIHC is accepting resumes for fall 2016 internship positions. Interns are highly valued and fully integrated into our staff work. We seek students passionate about social justice issues, with excellent writing and interpersonal skills.

The available positions are:

Field Intern. Assists the NLIHC Field team in creating email campaigns focused on important federal policies, writing blogs, managing our database of membership records, mobilizing the field for the legislative efforts, and reaching out to new and existing members.

Research Intern. Assists in ongoing quantitative and qualitative research projects, writes weekly articles on current research for *Memo to Members*, attends briefings, and responds to research inquiries.

Communications/Media Intern. Prepares and distributes press materials, assists with media research and outreach for publication releases, and works on social media projects. Maintains the media database and tracks press hits.

These positions begin in September and run until December and are at least 20-30 hours a week. Two semester placements are possible. NLIHC provides modest stipends.

A cover letter, resume, and writing sample are required for consideration. In your cover letter, please specify the position(s) for which you applying and that you are interested in a fall 2016 internship.

Interested students should send their materials to: Paul Kealey, Chief Operating Officer, National Low Income Housing Coalition, 1000 Vermont Avenue, NW, Suite 500, Washington, DC 20005 via email to pkealey@nlihc.org.

Staff

Andrew Aurand, Vice President for Research, x245
Josephine Clarke, Executive Assistant, x226
Dan Emmanuel, Research Analyst, x316
Ellen Errico, Graphic Design and Web Manager, x246
Ed Gramlich, Senior Advisor, x314
Sarah Jemison, Housing Advocacy Organizer, x244
Sarah Mickelson, Director of Public Policy, x228
Paul Kealey, Chief Operating Officer, x232
Joseph Lindstrom, Senior Organizer for Housing Advocacy, x222
Madeline McHale, Field Intern, x230
Khara Norris, Director of Administration, x242
Julia Rapp, Communications Intern, x252
James Saucedo, Housing Advocacy Organizer, x233
Christina Sin, Development Coordinator, x234
Elayne Weiss, Senior Housing Policy Analyst, x243
Renee Willis, Vice President for Field and Communications, x247
Diane Yentel, President and CEO, x228