

Volume 27, Issue 22
June 6, 2022

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HoUsed Campaign for Universal, Stable, Affordable Housing

Congress Returns from Recess to Continue Work on FY23 Appropriations and Reconciliation Bills – Take Action!

Congress returns to the Capitol today (June 6) to continue negotiations over a fiscal year (FY) 2023 spending bill and a significantly scaled-down reconciliation package, among other legislative priorities. Before leaving for their Memorial Day recess (see *Memo*, [5/31](#)), Senate Democrats reported meaningful progress on reaching a potential outline for a revived reconciliation package, renewing hope that congressional Democrats will be able to enact a reconciliation bill this year.

Over the last few weeks, Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) and Senator Joe Manchin (D-WV) have held several one-on-one meetings to discuss what a new reconciliation package might look like, scaled down from the original \$1.75 trillion in investments in the stalled “Build Back Better Act.” Senator Manchin maintains that any reconciliation package should focus on increasing federal revenues by changing the tax code and using new revenues to fight inflation, address climate change, draw down the federal deficit, and reduce prescription drug costs. The cost of housing is the [single largest component](#) of the Consumer Price Index (CPI), a key measure of inflation, and addressing the rising cost of housing is central to decreasing inflationary pressure on households, especially in the long term.

Democratic lawmakers are aiming to reach an agreement on a reconciliation outline by July 4 and to finalize legislative text and move the package through both the House and Senate before Congress adjourns for August recess on August 8. This condensed timeline leaves only a couple weeks to weigh in with Congress on the necessity of including robust, targeted affordable housing investments in any reconciliation package.

NLIHC is hosting a national call-in day and Twitterstorm on June 7 at 1 pm ET to urge Congress to include NLIHC’s top priorities in any reconciliation package:

- \$25 billion to expand rental assistance to more than 300,000 households. See how many vouchers your state would receive [here](#).
- \$65 billion to make critically needed repairs to public housing and preserve this valuable asset for its 2 million residents.
- \$15 billion for the national Housing Trust Fund to build and preserve over 150,000 affordable, accessible homes for households with the lowest incomes. See NLIHC’s breakdown of how much each state would receive through the Housing Trust Fund [here](#).

[Email, tweet, and call your representatives](#) on June 7 and urge them to include these once-in-a-generation housing investments targeted to ensure people with the lowest incomes have a safe, quality, affordable, and accessible place to call home. Use NLIHC’s [call-in script](#) and [advocacy toolkit](#) to help create your own message to Congress!

Budget reconciliation – which allows the Senate to pass legislation with a simple majority of 51 votes, rather than the 60 votes usually required in the chamber – represents the best opportunity to enact the bold, large-scale investments in affordable housing needed to address the [severe lack of deeply affordable rental homes](#). However, the annual appropriations process is also vital to ensuring continued and expanded funding for HUD’s affordable housing programs.

Senate Appropriations Chair Patrick Leahy (D-VT) intends to convene appropriations leaders in the House and Senate – including Senate Appropriations Ranking Member Richard Shelby (R-AL), House Appropriations Chair Rosa DeLauro (D-CT), and House Appropriations Ranking Member Kay Granger (R-TX) – to continue

negotiations over topline spending numbers for the fiscal year (FY) 2023 spending package. Appropriations leaders hope to avoid a significant delay in enacting a final bill after the FY22 bill stalled for almost six months.

With Chair Leahy and Ranking Member Shelby both slated to retire at the end of the year, members are feeling optimistic they will be able to find a compromise and enact an omnibus spending package for FY23. Even without an agreement on topline funding numbers, appropriators in the House will likely move forward with drafting FY23 spending bills, using [President Biden's FY23 budget request](#) as a benchmark. House appropriators set a tentative schedule for Appropriations subcommittees to review and vote on their respective bills during the period June 13-22 and for a full committee review and vote during the period June 22-30.

NLIHC and our partners in the Campaign for Housing and Community Development Funding ([CHCDF](#)) are leading our [annual 302\(b\) letter](#) to demand that Congress provide the highest possible level of funding for affordable housing, homelessness, and community development resources in FY23. Advocates should [contact their members of Congress](#) and urge them to support significant funding for NLIHC's top priorities:

- \$32.13 billion for the Tenant-Based Rental Assistance (TBRA) program to renew all existing contracts and expand housing vouchers to an additional 200,000 households.
- \$5.125 billion for the Public Housing Capital Fund to preserve public housing, and \$5.06 billion for the Public Housing Operating Fund.
- \$3.6 billion for HUD's Homeless Assistance Grants program to address the needs of people experiencing homelessness.
- \$100 million for legal assistance to prevent evictions.
- \$300 million for the competitive tribal housing program, targeted to tribes with the greatest needs.

Chair Maxine Waters to Join Today's National HoUsed Campaign Call for Universal, Stable, Affordable Housing!

Join today's (June 6) national call for the "HoUsed: Universal, Stable, and Affordable Housing" campaign from 2:30 to 4 pm ET to hear from U.S. House Financial Services Committee Chair Maxine Waters (D-CA), who will discuss the state of play in Congress for achieving significant new investments in affordable housing. We will discuss the urgent need to include robust, federal housing investments targeted to the lowest-income households in any final reconciliation package and share details on how you can [participate in NLIHC's National Day of Advocacy on June 7](#) to urge Congress to make these vital investments.

Sandra Park from the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and Maria Roumiantseva from the National Coalition for a Civil Right to Counsel (NCCRC) will share findings from a new [joint report](#) on the impact of right-to-counsel legislation on evictions and how right to counsel can help prevent the discriminatory impacts of evictions on communities. We will hear from NLIHC's End Rental Arrears to Stop Evictions (ERASE) project about its new [report](#) on trends in emergency rental assistance (ERA) spending, reallocation, and disparities between grantees' remaining ERA funds and ongoing need. A member of the ERASE project cohort will join the call to share a new eviction tracking tool, and we will receive updates from the field, hear the latest updates from Capitol Hill, and more.

Register for the call at: <https://tinyurl.com/ru73qan>

Join NLIHC's National Call-In Day and Twitterstorm on June 7 to Demand Affordable Housing Investments Targeted to People with the Lowest Incomes in Any Reconciliation Package!

Join NLIHC on June 7 for a national call-in day and Twitterstorm at 1 pm ET to urge Congress to include robust funding for affordable housing investments targeted to people with the lowest incomes in any reconciliation package! After months of delays, the White House, congressional leaders, and key senators have restarted negotiations over a scaled-down reconciliation package that could include once-in-a-generation housing investments targeted to ensure people with the lowest incomes have a safe, quality, affordable, and accessible place to call home. We cannot let this opportunity to advance the bold, long-term solutions needed to address the [nation's affordable housing crisis](#) pass us by!

[Email, tweet, and call your representatives](#) on June 7 and urge them to support NLIHC's [top policy priorities](#) in any reconciliation package:

- \$25 billion to expand rental assistance to more than 300,000 households with low incomes. See how many vouchers your state would receive [here](#).
- \$65 billion to make critically needed repairs to public housing, and ensure current and future residents have safe, quality homes.
- \$15 billion for the national Housing Trust Fund to build, preserve, and operate an estimated 150,000 units of affordable, accessible housing for households with the lowest incomes. See NLIHC's breakdown of how much funding each state would receive through the Housing Trust Fund [here](#).

Use NLIHC's [call-in script](#) and [advocacy toolkit](#) to help create your own message to Congress.

Thank you for your advocacy!

Emergency Rental Assistance

U.S. Treasury Releases Emergency Rental Assistance Spending Data through April: 5.6 Million Payments Have Been Made to Households in Need

The U.S. Department of the Treasury (Treasury) released on June 3 Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) spending data through April 2022. ERA grantees spent approximately \$1.1 billion of ERA2 and \$563 million of ERA1 in April alone, compared to \$1.4 billion of ERA2 and \$714 million of ERA1 spent in March. Overall, \$28.5 billion of ERA1 and ERA2 have been spent on household assistance, administrative expenses, and housing stability services. The ERA program has made nearly 5.6 million payments to households since January 2021.

Nearly \$1.1 billion of ERA2 funds were spent on assistance to households in April, down from \$1.4 billion of ERA2 funds spent in March and \$1.2 billion in February. Grantees spent more than \$563 million of ERA1 in April, down from \$714 million spent in March and \$660 million spent in February. April was the fourth consecutive month that grantees spent less than \$1 billion of ERA1.

ERA1 Trends: States have spent \$12.5 billion in ERA1 funds, or 74% of the \$16.9 billion of revised state allocations, and localities have spent more than \$4.9 billion, or 73% of the \$6.8 billion of revised allocations. By the end of April, 18 state grantees and the District of Columbia had expended over 75% of their revised

ERA1 allocations on assistance to households. California, Connecticut, North Carolina, and Virginia had spent more than 90% of their revised ERA1 allocations. Because grantees are allowed to spend 10% of their allocations on administrative expenses, it is likely that these grantees have exhausted their entire ERA1 allocations. Conversely, 11 state grantees had expended less than 45% of their revised ERA1 allocations by the end of March 2022, despite having [reallocated portions](#) of their initial ERA1 funds.

ERA2 Trends: State grantees had spent \$6.4 billion of ERA2 funds by the end of April – approximately 39% of the \$15.9 billion allocated to states. Similarly, localities have spent approximately 41% of their allocations, or \$2.2 billion of the \$5.3 billion allocated to localities. Eleven state grantees and the District of Columbia had spent over 80% of their ERA2 allocations by the end of April. Four state grantees have yet to spend any of their ERA2 funds, and two state grantees, Arkansas and Nebraska, have not accepted ERA2 funds.

NLIHC tracks ERA spending on the [ERA Dashboard](#) and [Spending Tracker](#). Our tracking integrates Treasury data with real-time data from program dashboards and program administrators to provide a closer estimate of how much ERA funding has been obligated to date.

Coronavirus, Disasters, Housing, and Homelessness

Interagency Council on Homelessness Releases Statement on Rising Rate of Unsheltered Homelessness

The U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) released a [statement](#) on May 25 in response to a deepening crisis involving unsheltered homelessness and the spread of encampments. The statement asserts that unsheltered homelessness is being exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and acknowledges that the crisis is growing worse every day. The statement calls on state and local elected officials to refrain from quickly clearing encampments and instead to integrate strategies for addressing unsheltered homelessness into a coordinated, cross-government effort that involves individuals experiencing homelessness themselves and utilizes emerging best practices in outreach, shelter, supportive services, and housing.

The statement also reiterates the negative impact of removing encampments when removal is conducted without offering low-barrier shelter or other housing options. “There are many reasons a person without a home may stay outside rather than in a shelter,” reads the statement. “Local shelters may be full, or the individual may not meet requirements for sobriety and other mandates. They may not want to be separated from family members, partners, or pets. Or they may fear having their belongings lost or stolen. Creating safe, inclusive indoor spaces that address these concerns is crucial. Forcing people to move into a shelter or moving them from place to place without a clear pathway to housing only dissolves trust and leads to personal setbacks.”

In the statement, USICH also announces a new plan to issue guiding principles and practices to help communities address unsheltered homelessness and encampments. These materials will draw on ongoing work being conducted at local levels and serve to collect and share emerging best practices.

Read the statement at: <https://bit.ly/3zaMXE3>

Housing Trust Fund

NLIHC Releases National Housing Trust Fund 2022 State Allocations

NLIHC released a consolidated list of estimated national Housing Trust Fund (HTF) allocations by state and U.S. territory for 2022. The new resource is based on HUD’s May 17 [announcement](#) that nearly \$749 million in national HTF dollars have been allocated to states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. territories (see [Memo, 5/23](#)). The new resource can be downloaded from NLIHC’s National Housing Trust Fund Allocations [webpage](#).

Fannie Mae (Fannie) and Freddie Mac (Freddie) collected \$740 million in 2021 for the HTF to allocate in 2022 (see [Memo, 3/7](#)), though in a media [release](#), HUD indicated that only \$738 million has been allocated. However, two factors boost the actual amount allocated to nearly \$749 million. First, funds recaptured from some states that missed the statute’s requirement to commit funds within two years are being reprogrammed and added to the total transferred from Fannie and Freddie for 2022. Second, due to a rescission provision, each year a percentage of the amount received from Fannie and Freddie must be removed from the amount transferred to HUD, but the amount rescinded from the previous year is restored the following year.

Created through the “Housing and Economic Recovery Act of 2008” (HERA) and overseen by HUD’s Office of Affordable Housing Programs (OAHP) in the Office of Community Planning and Development (CPD), the HTF allocates funding annually to states to build, preserve, rehabilitate, and operate rental housing for extremely low-income households (ELI) – those with incomes less than 30% of area median income (AMI) or less than the federal poverty line. Nationally, there is a [shortage of 7 million rental homes](#) affordable and available to people with the lowest incomes.

View the 2022 HTF allocations by state and territory at: bit.ly/3x8IH6y

Read more about the HTF on [page 3-1](#) of NLIHC’s *2022 Advocates’ Guide* and on NLIHC’s two HTF webpages, one providing [basic information](#) and the other providing [state-specific information](#).

HUD

HUD Launches “Our Way Home” Initiative to Promote Local Efforts to Address Housing Shortage

HUD Secretary Marcia L. Fudge introduced a new initiative, “Our Way Home,” on June 1. The initiative builds on the Biden administration’s “Housing Supply Action Plan” (see [Memo 5/16](#)), which aims to close the housing supply gap within five years, with support from legislative action. As part of the initiative, HUD hosted several “Day of Action” events in each of the 10 HUD regions on June 1 and 2. HUD regional administrators hosted events to discuss housing supply challenges and hear from local leaders in Colchester, VT; Jersey City, NJ; Wilmington, DE; Birmingham, AL; Milwaukee, WI; Albuquerque, NM; Omaha, NE; Westminster, CO; Los Angeles, CA; and Boise, ID. The agency also created an “Our Way Home” [website](#) to track HUD programs that build and preserve homes.

Secretary Fudge intends for the “Our Way Home” initiative to build upon the Biden administration’s Housing Supply Action Plan. The Plan includes a series of measures designed to increase the supply of housing over the next five years, including (1) using federal transportation funds to incentivize jurisdictions to reduce restrictive local zoning laws; (2) supporting manufactured housing, accessory dwelling units, and small-scale developments; and (3) streamlining federal financing and funding sources to help lower costs and speed development. The “Our Way Home” initiative brings this plan to life by convening roundtables, listening sessions, and peer learning opportunities to connect communities with HUD leadership and resources and to highlight success stories in communities that have preserved or increased affordable housing. Specifically, the initiative will highlight stories involving local governments that have worked to:

- Create permanent housing with services for vulnerable populations, including those experiencing homelessness, seniors, and persons with disabilities.
- Advance fair housing by ensuring families have access to affordable housing in communities of their choice.
- Build housing connected with transit and new infrastructure investments, so all families have a direct connection to economic opportunities.
- Use innovative and sustainable building strategies in order to scale cost-efficient models and create homes and communities that are resilient.

View Secretary Fudge’s statement on the initiative at: https://www.hud.gov/ourwayhome/blog_06_01_22

View the Our Way Home website at: <https://www.hud.gov/ourwayhome>

Congress

Senator Scott Releases Report on Affordable, Accessible Housing for Older Adults

U.S. Senate Special Committee on Aging Ranking Member Tim Scott (R-SC) released a new report on April 1, “[Housing for the Golden Years: Trends, Gaps, and Solutions for Older Americans](#).” The report examines shifting demographic trends and supply gaps in the availability of affordable, accessible housing for seniors and suggests ways the public and private sectors can help increase the supply of affordable, accessible senior housing.

“Seniors and people with disabilities comprise more than half of public housing residents today, but accessible units remain far too limited,” explained Senator Scott in a [press release](#) announcing the report. “Having a place to call home is part of the American Dream. As our senior population increases, we must increase safe and affordable housing options for those in their golden years.”

Read the report at: <https://bit.ly/392xcoi>

Opportunity Starts at Home

New Research Links Housing Instability to Negative Educational Outcomes

The John W. Gardner Center at Stanford University has released a [study](#) exploring the connections between housing instability and negative educational outcomes among students in San Mateo County, California. The report finds that students experiencing housing instability between 2016 and 2019 were six times more likely to be chronically absent from school and four times more likely not to graduate from high school. The study also finds that students experiencing housing instability are disproportionately Latino, Black, and English-language learners.

“From our report’s findings, we conclude that youth experiencing housing instability face unique challenges from each other and from their housing-stable peers, and public school districts in the county face many challenges in both identifying and serving students experiencing housing instability,” write the study’s authors.

Read the study [here](#).

Read an article about the study [here](#).

Our Homes, Our Votes

Join June 13 *Our Homes, Our Votes: 2022 Webinar on Registering Residents of Subsidized Housing to Vote!*

The *Our Homes, Our Votes: 2022* webinar series features experts with frontline election experience who walk through every step of voter and candidate engagement activities and support housing organizations' nonpartisan election efforts. The next webinar, "Registering Residents of Subsidized Housing," will be held on Monday, June 13, at 2:30 pm ET. [Register for the webinar series here.](#)

Housing advocates, resident councils, and tenant associations are eager to increase voter registration among new residents and other individuals who are eligible to vote. There are best practices for finding and registering these voters. This webinar will share strategies for identifying residences and neighborhoods with high numbers of eligible voters who are not yet registered; incorporating voter registration into day-to-day operations at service agencies, libraries, and community centers; working with managers to reach low-income residents; and using tools such as the National Housing Preservation Database. The panel will feature Teresa Clark, deputy director of Washington Low Income Housing Alliance, and Dan Emmanuel, senior research analyst at NLIHC.

Our Homes, Our Votes webinars will be held on a biweekly basis until the week that follows the 2022 midterm elections. View the full schedule for the webinar series [here](#).

Become an *Our Homes, Our Votes* Affiliate!

Our Homes, Our Votes affiliates are nonpartisan organizations that are formally identified with the campaign and committed to carrying out its goals. Tenant associations, homeless service providers, tribal organizations, student groups, neighborhood organizations, and any other group working to deliver more housing voters to the polls is invited to become an *Our Homes, Our Votes* affiliate. There is no cost for being an affiliate, and affiliates can request free merchandise for community events. Affiliates also receive permission to use our campaign logos and images on co-branded materials, additional guidance and support from NLIHC staff, opportunities to have their work featured in the *Our Homes, Our Votes* biweekly newsletter, and more! To sign your organization up as an affiliate, please fill out [this form](#).

Do you work with housing providers in your network? If so, invite them to participate in the *Our Homes, Our Votes* Housing Providers Council! Reach out to ourhomes@nlihc.org for more information.

Research

NLIHC Releases Spanish-Language Edition of *The Gap: La Escasez de Viviendas Asequibles*

NLIHC has released [The Gap: La Escasez de Viviendas Asequibles](#), a Spanish-language edition of its annual report on the shortage of homes affordable and available to the lowest-income renters. The report finds that the lowest-income renters in the U.S. face a shortage of approximately 7 million affordable and available rental homes. Drawing on multiple data sources, the report documents how the pandemic has exacerbated the housing crisis for the lowest-income renters. The report examines both short- and long-term policy interventions needed

to address the immediate housing impacts of the pandemic and the underlying shortage of affordable housing. Read or download the new Spanish-language edition [here](#).

The report finds that fewer than four affordable and available homes exist for every 10 extremely low-income renter households nationwide. As a result of this shortage of affordable homes, 71% of extremely low-income renter households are severely housing cost-burdened, spending more than half of their limited incomes on housing. They account for more than seven of every 10 severely housing cost-burdened renters in the U.S.

Every state and metropolitan area has a significant shortage of affordable rental housing for the lowest-income households. Statewide shortages range from just under two affordable and available rental homes for every 10 of the lowest-income renter households in Nevada to a little more than six in West Virginia. Across the 50 largest metropolitan areas, the shortage is least severe in Providence, Rhode Island, where there are five affordable and available rental homes for every 10 of the lowest-income renter households. The shortage is most severe in Las Vegas, Nevada, where there are fewer than two affordable and available rental homes for every ten of the lowest-income renter households.

The report also finds that systemic racism, both past and present, has left people of color disproportionately likely to be among the lowest-income renters facing a shortage of affordable housing. Twenty percent of Black households, 18% of AIAN households, 15% of Latino households, and 10% of Asian households are counted among the lowest-income renters, compared to only 6% of white non-Latino households. Black renters are especially likely to face eviction.

The report shows that these lowest-income renter households disproportionately suffered from the effects of lost income and housing insecurity during the pandemic. At one point – in January 2021 – nearly 8 million renters were behind on rent. The federal government took unprecedented actions to protect these renters. The government’s interventions, though, were temporary and limited in scope. Resources such as federal emergency rental assistance are now running out in many areas. Almost half of state programs funded by the U.S. Department of the Treasury’s Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) programs could run out of funding by the end of 2022. Longer-term federal investments in affordable housing are needed to combat the underlying shortage of affordable housing that exposed the lowest-income renters to housing instability in the first place.

The report argues that Congress must make sustained investments in key HUD and USDA Rural Housing programs to address the underlying systemic shortage of rental homes affordable to the lowest-income renters. These investments should include significant commitments to deeply income-targeted programs such as the national Housing Trust Fund, Housing Choice Vouchers, and public housing. The funding levels for these programs in the House-passed “Build Back Better Act” provide a minimum benchmark for any new reconciliation bill in Congress. As *The Gap* demonstrates, the housing crisis for the lowest-income renters will persist long after the pandemic without such investments.

Read the new Spanish-language edition of *The Gap* and explore an accompanying interactive map at: www.nlihc.org/gap

Study Examines Rent Savings in the LIHTC Program

An article published in *Housing Policy Debate*, “[The Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Program: A Multicity Rent Savings Analysis](#),” examines rent savings in the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program across 12 U.S. housing markets. The authors, Uche Oluku and Shaoming Cheng, find that new LIHTC developments offer rent savings relative to nearby market-rate rental housing, though the extent of these savings varies by market and declines as LIHTC developments age.

The authors utilized HUD’s LIHTC property database to identify LIHTC developments across the 12 housing markets included in the study: Albuquerque, NM; Billings, MT; Buffalo, NY; Chicago, IL; Indianapolis, IN; Louisville, KY; Manchester, NH; Miami, FL; Midland, TX; San Jose, CA; Sioux Falls, SD; and Washington, DC. After identifying LIHTC developments, the authors scanned online rental listings to collect rent data for vacant units in developments identified as LIHTC-financed. The authors then matched data for these units to units with the same number of bedrooms in nearby market-rate developments to conduct their rent savings analysis. Matching developments based on geographic proximity allowed the authors to control for locational characteristics that might have affected rents. Additional data on community, development-level, and unit-level characteristics were also collected for use as controls.

New LIHTC units provided savings relative to similar, nearby market-rate units in all twelve housing markets even after controlling for other factors. Monthly rent savings were most significant in large cities with strong housing markets such as Chicago, Miami, San Jose, and Washington, DC. Estimated monthly savings for two-bedroom LIHTC units ranged from \$949 in Chicago to \$1,114 in San Jose. Meanwhile, rent savings were least significant in small cities with weak housing markets such as Sioux Falls and Billings, where estimated monthly savings for two-bedroom units were \$326 and \$285, respectively. Rent savings were greater for two- and three-bedroom units than for one-bedroom units in all 12 cities.

However, the authors also found that the rent savings for LIHTC units compared to market-rate units declined over time. For example, the authors observed an estimated 36% decrease in savings for a 30-year-old one-bedroom unit in Washington, DC compared to a new one. In Sioux Falls, Billings, Midland, and Louisville, LIHTC rent savings disappeared for one-bedroom units after nine, 10, 12, and 20 years, respectively.

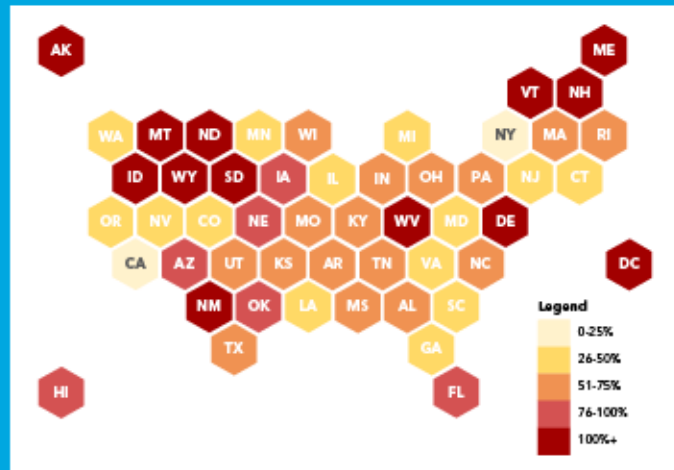
The authors conclude that LIHTC produces the greatest benefit in larger cities with strong housing markets and for units with more than one bedroom. As a result, the authors suggest that state and local LIHTC administrators should prioritize tax credits for developments in larger cities with stronger housing markets and developments providing larger units. Similarly, the authors argue that federal administrators could use these findings in determining which states or jurisdictions should receive tax credits from the national pool of unallocated tax credits.

Read the report at: <https://bit.ly/3afGPQC>

Fact of the Week

States Received Disproportionate Emergency Rental Assistance Allocations for Meeting the Needs of their Housing Cost-Burdened Households

Projected Households Served through Emergency Rental Assistance as Proportion of Cost-Burdened Low-Income Renter Households



Source: NLIHC, "Balancing Act: An Analysis of Remaining Emergency Rental Assistance Funds, Reallocation, and Outstanding Need," <https://bit.ly/392KoJF>



Source: NLIHC, "Balancing Act: An Analysis of Remaining Emergency Rental Assistance Funds, Reallocation, and Outstanding Need," <https://bit.ly/392KoJF>

Tenant Talk Live

Join Today's (June 6) Tenant Talk Live Webinar on the Need for Significant Federal Investments in Public Housing!

NLIHC invites tenants, advocates, and others to join today's (June 6) session of "Tenant Talk Live," a webinar with and for renter and resident leaders. Scheduled for 6 pm ET this evening, the webinar will feature advocates from Human Rights Watch and Save Section 9 and staff from NLIHC, who will come together to discuss the importance of preserving public housing through significant federal funding. Register for tonight's Tenant Talk Live webinar at: <https://bit.ly/361rmy2>

In 1974, the Nixon administration placed a moratorium on the building of [public housing](#) that has resulted in little new public housing being constructed in the last 40 years. In the wake of the moratorium, advocates have focused on preserving the remaining public housing stock. One of the biggest challenges for public housing advocates is the lack of federal funding for public housing agencies (PHAs). Humans Rights Watch (HRW) [interviewed New York City public housing residents](#), who drew attention to the consequences of low investments in the country's public housing stock, including poor living conditions and lack of repairs. Public housing has often been cited by residents as a useful resource for people with the lowest incomes, but it can be difficult to live somewhere that is in disrepair with minimal support. Congress can address these problems by making significant investments in public housing.

In the webinar, staff from NLIHC will be joined by Jackson Gandour, researcher at Human Rights Watch; Ramona Ferreyra, advocate with Save Section 9; and Mrs. Loraine Brown, resident board member with NLIHC.

We hope you will join our panelists to learn more about the history of public housing and how you can advocate for significant investments in our country's remaining public housing stock.

And remember: Tenant Talk Live would not be possible without tenants like you! We strive to connect and engage with tenants and tenant leaders through our webinars. If you are a low-income tenant and have a topic you would like to propose for an upcoming Tenant Talk Live meeting, or if you would like to participate as a speaker on an upcoming call or webinar, please email Sidney Betancourt at: sbetancourt@nlihc.org

Register for the next Tenant Talk Live webinar at: bit.ly/361rmy2

Stay up to date on Tenant Talk Live events via the [Facebook group](#)

Tenant Talk

Feature Your Artwork in NLIHC's Summer *Tenant Talk* Publication!

This summer, NLIHC will host a competition to find the right piece of original artwork to feature on the cover of our upcoming edition of *Tenant Talk: Housing is Built with Ballots*. The issue will highlight the intersections of voter engagement and housing justice as part of NLIHC's *Our Homes Our Votes* campaign. **Now through June 24**, we invite you to send us a creative cover submission promoting the theme of the issue. An award of \$250 will be presented to the winner, and all submissions will be featured on NLIHC's [On the Home Front](#) blog page. Click [here](#) to enter the competition today, and please feel free to mail outreach@nlihc.org with any questions.

From the Field

Vermont Increases Funding for Affordable Housing and Passes Bills to Protect Renters and Address Systemic Racism in Housing

Vermont's legislature adjourned in May after increasing funding for affordable housing and passing legislation to protect renters from unsafe building conditions and address discrimination and systemic racism in housing. Advocates worked with state legislators to advance these legislative aims and to make the needed compromises to prevent a gubernatorial veto. While some important pieces of legislation – such as a [just-cause eviction measure in the city of Burlington](#) – were ultimately vetoed by the governor, many [important improvements](#) have already been signed into law this year.

Advocates pressured Vermont's legislature to increase the base funding for the [Vermont Housing and Conservation Board \(VHCB\)](#), which administers state funding for affordable housing and works to increase housing availability. VHCB's main source of funding is a percentage of the property transfer tax (PTT). However, the state has routinely failed to provide full statutory base funding to VHCB. This year, the legislature increased the base funding by \$10 million – twice what it received in previous years. Though still only two-thirds of its full statutory funding, the increase represents a large investment in affordable housing. VHCB also received significant allocations of the state's "American Rescue Plan Act" (ARPA) dollars to support specific projects.

The Rental Housing Safety Bill (S. 210) was [passed](#) by the legislature on May 11 and signed by Governor Phil Scott on June 2. The legislation establishes a complaint-based inspection system within the statewide Division

of Fire Safety to address unsafe building conditions which are prevalent among Vermont's aging housing stock. The Division will respond to complaints from renters, landlords, and neighbors and enforce health and housing codes. \$400,000 was [allocated](#) from Vermont's ARPA funding to establish the inspection system, with future funding expected to come through general funds.

S. 210 also provides \$20 million in ARPA funding for the [Vermont Housing Improvement Program \(VHIP\)](#). The program would award grants or loans of up to \$50,000 to landlords to fix rental housing that is not up to code, as well as to create new accessory dwelling units. The intent of this program is to convert Vermont's derelict housing into rentable housing. Landlords must give preference to people experiencing homelessness, refugees, or people making less than 80 percent of area median income when they rent out the refurbished or new units.

More expansive Rental Housing Safety legislation was passed by the legislature last year but vetoed by the governor. This year, the legislature and advocates reintroduced a substantively similar bill while attempting to satisfy the concerns in the governor's veto. Ultimately, a statewide registry of rental properties was eliminated from the bill to prevent another [veto threat](#) from the governor. Advocates remain committed to working on the registry in the future.

A Housing Omnibus bill (S. 226) was also [approved](#) by the legislature and includes provisions to:

- Establish a Housing Equity Council to support inclusive development projects.
- Reduce barriers to multifamily housing and accessory dwelling unit development.
- Reduce discrimination and systemic racism in statewide housing programs.
- Establish a Land Access and Opportunity Board to address structural racism and prevalent wealth disparities that cause barriers to land and homeownership.

The Housing Omnibus Bill and other affordable housing wins were a direct result of a successful advocacy campaign that took advantage of political will and long-standing priorities. The Vermont Affordable Housing Coalition (VAHC), an NLIHC state partner, and a broad group of diverse partners led the charge to advance certain legislative housing priorities that will impact long-term housing availability and access to quality homes across the state.

“There was a lot of conversation around this bill on its impact on permanently affordable housing, and it includes pieces to address [it],” says David Martins, VAHC director. “Advocates and legislators wanted to know: how do we keep these investments affordable perpetually? This is a very big change in the tenor of the conversation and means that advocates have done their job well over the past 30 years.”

Even with these pieces of legislation making a meaningful contribution to safe and affordable housing in the state, more work still needs to be done. The Vermont Affordable Housing Coalition and other advocates across the state will continue to advocate for additional investments and long-term funding in future legislative sessions.

“We're excited about the high level of funding made available and the innovative approaches being taken to create much needed housing for low- and middle-income Vermonters,” says Michelle Kersey, VAHC chair. “While the housing crisis won't be solved overnight, this is a great start.”

For more information about the Vermont Affordable Housing Coalition or the 2022 Vermont legislative session, contact David at: david@vtaffordablehousing.org

NLIHC in the News

NLIHC in the News for the Week of May 29

The following are some of the news stories that NLIHC contributed to during the week of May 29:

- “Desperate renters facing bidding wars” *MarketWatch*, May 31 at: <https://on.mktw.net/3atFgyu>
 - “Digital Atlas Reveals Zoning’s Impact on Affordable Housing” *GOVERNING*, June 2 at: <https://bit.ly/3wZg9uY>
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NLIHC News

Where to Find Us – June 6

NLIHC staff will be speaking at the following events in the coming months:

- [2022 Just Economy Conference \(NCRC\)](#), “Housing Justice Perspectives: Key Issues in Fair & Affordable Rental Housing” – Panel Discussion, Washington, DC, June 13 (Sarah Saadian)
 - [Opportunity Starts at Home](#) Minnesota – Virtual, June 14 (Sarah Saadian)
 - [Habitat for Humanity](#), Advancing Black Homeownership – Washington, DC, June 14 (Renee Willis)
 - [Montana Housing Partnership, “Table Talk”](#) – Virtual, June 15 (Courtney Cooperman)
 - [National Coalition for the Homeless, Congressional Briefing](#) – Virtual (or Washington, DC), June 23 (Sarah Saadian)
 - [Orange County United Way: Housing Policy Made Simple](#) – Virtual, July 12 (Diane Yentel)
 - [2022 Building CAPACD Convention](#), National CAPACD – Seattle, WA, July 13 (Sarah Saadian)
 - [Princeton Community Housing Gala](#) – Keynote Speaker, Virtual, July 21 (Diane Yentel)
 - [HousingNext Grand Rapids Michigan Policy Conference](#) – Keynote Speaker, Grand Rapids, MI, August 16 (Diane Yentel)
 - [Idaho Housing and Finance Association Annual Housing Conference](#) – Keynote Speaker, Boise, ID, August 22-23 (Diane Yentel)
 - [AARP](#) Housing Workshop Plenary Panel – Virtual, September 22 (Diane Yentel)
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