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HoUsed Campaign

House Financial Services Committee Holds Hearing on Universal Vouchers

The House Financial Services Committee held a [hearing](#) on June 9 titled “Universal Vouchers: Ending Homelessness and Expanding Economic Opportunity in America.” The hearing addressed the need to make Housing Choice Vouchers (HCV) universally available. Witnesses offered testimony and answered questions about the need for universal housing vouchers and source-of-income (SOI) protections for voucher holders; improvements to the HCV program; and investments in affordable housing supply. The panel addressed how expanding rental assistance to every eligible household would help end homelessness and address racial disparities in housing and homelessness.

Witnesses included Ann Oliva, senior fellow at the Center on Budget and Policies Priorities; Mary Cunningham, senior fellow and vice president of Metropolitan Housing and Communities at the Urban Institute; Benjamin Metcalf, managing director at the Turner Center for Housing Innovation; Chancela Al-Mansour, executive director of the Housing Rights Center; and Howard Husock, adjunct scholar of domestic policy at the American Enterprise Institute.

In her opening testimony, Ms. Oliva stated: “Expanding the Housing Choice Voucher program to provide a voucher to every eligible household is the single most important step we can take to address the homelessness crisis. . . . This step would fundamentally alter the landscape for people experiencing homelessness, institutionalization, and housing instability, ultimately preventing many stints of homelessness because households with low-incomes would be able to afford housing and, thus, would be less likely to fall behind on rent and face eviction.”

She expressed gratitude to Chairwoman Waters and Representatives Emanuel Cleaver (D-MO) and Ritchie Torres (D-NY) for their work on the “[Ending Homelessness Act](#),” highlighting that the bill provides a comprehensive approach to ending homelessness by addressing housing affordability and supply, providing critical resources to homeless systems, and enacting needed protections for voucher holders. The Ending Homelessness Act proposes to establish a universal voucher program to ensure every eligible household can receive rental assistance, bans source-of-income discrimination, increases housing choice, and invests \$5 billion over 5 years in the national Housing Trust Fund to address the shortage of affordable housing and to combat homelessness. See NLIHC’s [fact sheet](#) for more information.

In response to concerns about landlord participation in the HCV program, witnesses explained solutions to this challenge. Panelists described the need for national SOI protections to end landlord discrimination against voucher holders and offered solutions for increasing landlord participation, including small area fair market rents, improved inspection process, and other flexibility and incentives.

Asked about the connection between universal housing vouchers and racial justice, Mary Cunningham stated that “housing vouchers are one of the most powerful tools in our toolbox to address racial disparities in homelessness and among renters.” Chancela Al-Mansour discussed in her testimony how Section 8 discrimination disproportionately harms Latino and African American families, limiting housing choice for these households and perpetuating segregation. Al-Mansour highlighted the need to pair the expansion of housing vouchers with robust tenant protections and increased enforcement of fair housing protections.

Representative Jesús “Chuy” García (D-IL) emphasized the need for policy change: “We need to break the brutal cycle of disinvestment, displacement, and homelessness. We need to build back better and that means policies that recognize that housing is a human right.” He continued, “In the richest country on earth, every human being should have a roof over their head. Our current housing policies simply don’t meet the need.” “The best path to housing as human right, to housing as an entitlement, is housing vouchers for all,” stated

Representative Ritchie Torres (D-NY), who recently released a draft bill to create a national stabilization fund to provide short-term emergency rental assistance to the lowest-income renters, funded at \$3 billion annually. He will soon formally introduce his “[Stable Families Act](#).”

At the end of the hearing, Chairwoman Waters submitted into the record NLIHC’s [national letter](#) signed by nearly 1,000 organizations in support of universal housing vouchers.

Watch a recording of the hearing at: <https://youtu.be/WPIWWZgjzxA>

Read a discussion draft of the “Ending Homelessness Act” at: <https://bit.ly/3gqDfSZ>

NLIHC’s fact sheet on the “Ending Homelessness Act” is available at: <https://bit.ly/2SuQLx9>

Read a discussion draft of the “Stable Families Act” at: <https://bit.ly/3xhUCfR>

Representatives Jayapal and Meng Reintroduce “Housing is a Human Right Act”

Representatives Pramila Jayapal (D-WA) and Grace Meng (D-NY) on June 8 reintroduced the “[Housing is a Human Right Act](#).” Representative Jayapal joined NLIHC’s national call on June 7 to announce the reintroduction of the bill and discuss the vital importance of affordable, accessible housing. If enacted, the bill would invest more than \$200 billion in affordable, accessible housing and support services. Additionally, the bill would provide \$27 billion a year for homelessness services, \$100 million a year for community-driven alternatives to criminalization of people experiencing homelessness, and make targeted investments in communities at disproportionate risk of homelessness.

“Experiencing homelessness is not a moral failure of individuals, but a structural failing on the part of a country that has long refused to make safe and affordable housing a priority. This crisis of housing instability is human-created but that means that we can fix it — and we must,” said Congresswoman Jayapal. “By investing billions of dollars in housing infrastructure, we will provide affordable housing and supportive services for vulnerable communities while ensuring that everyone has a bed to sleep in, a roof over their head, and their dignity recognized. By doing so, we will not only finally guarantee housing as a human right in this country, but we will create an America where everyone has a place to call home.”

“Housing is a human right, and everybody in our country deserves a safe and affordable place to live,” said Congresswoman Meng. “Unfortunately, too many Americans are forced to choose between having a roof over their head and affording basic necessities. And the COVID-19 pandemic has only exacerbated an already dire housing crisis in New York and across the nation, forcing more people into poverty. Housing instability and homelessness is debilitating and demeaning. This is completely unacceptable and must change. That is why I am proud to join Congresswoman Jayapal in introducing the Housing is a Human Right Act, which makes long overdue, monumental investments in housing infrastructure and homelessness services. This gives communities like mine the resources we need to guarantee access to affordable housing, as well as the tools needed to tackle homelessness — while upholding the dignity of each person. It’s time to make our communities livable for ALL people.”

NLIHC’s President and CEO Diane Yentel was quoted in the press release, stating that “homelessness is one of our country’s most urgent, tragic and solvable crises. The solution to homelessness is affordable and accessible homes, and while we have the resources to provide such homes to all those in need, we lack the political will to invest in solutions at the scale necessary. I applaud Representatives Jayapal and Meng for their bold leadership in introducing legislation that, as part of the People’s Housing Platform, would ensure that people with the lowest incomes and the most marginalized people in America have a stable, affordable home.”

Learn more about the bill at: <https://tinyurl.com/2pkf239u>

View the full press release at: <https://tinyurl.com/yp5dv5su>

Bipartisan Group of Senators Proposes New Infrastructure Bill, Path Forward Remains Unclear

Negotiations between President Joe Biden and Senator Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV) ended on June 8 with both agreeing that, despite weeks of good-faith effort, the two sides remained too far apart to strike a compromise. Instead, bipartisan groups of senators and representatives have stepped in to reach an alternative deal.

The House Problem Solvers Caucus on June 9 released a framework for a compromise that would provide only \$10 billion to support veteran housing, compared with the \$319 billion in housing investments proposed by President Biden, while a bipartisan group of ten senators the next day released an outline of a \$1.2 trillion proposal that includes \$579 billion in new spending. Neither proposal includes the major investments in affordable, accessible housing needed for millions of households with the lowest incomes.

Advocates should contact their representatives and senators to remind them that housing is infrastructure and to urge the inclusion of the [HoUSed campaign's top priorities](#) in any infrastructure package:

- Expansion of rental assistance to every eligible household
- \$70 billion to repair and make energy-efficient upgrades to public housing
- At least \$40 billion for the national Housing Trust Fund to build and preserve homes affordable to people with the lowest incomes

Take action today by [calling your senators and representatives](#) to urge that any infrastructure bill include these crucial investments. You can also join the 1,000 organizations supporting the HoUSed campaign's [infrastructure priorities](#) by [signing on to a national letter](#) in support of these bold solutions.

Sign your organization on to the national letter in support of HoUSed campaign priorities at: <https://tinyurl.com/zbau4kee>

Find your members of Congress at: <https://tinyurl.com/un7cm8tm>

Learn more about the HoUSed campaign and get involved at: <https://nlihc.org/housed>

Join NLIHC's National Call on "HoUSed: Universal, Stable, and Affordable Housing" Today at 2:30 pm ET

Join today's (June 14) national HoUSed campaign call from 2:30-4 pm ET. Senator Chris Van Hollen (D-MD) will join the call to discuss the reintroduction of the bipartisan "Family Stability and Opportunity Vouchers Act," which would provide an additional 500,000 housing vouchers for the lowest-income households. Gene Sperling, senior advisor to President Biden and American Rescue Plan coordinator, will join to discuss the administration's latest efforts to ensure stimulus checks reach people experiencing homelessness. We will also hear updates on the CDC eviction moratorium, share findings from a recent report on immigrant families' access to pandemic assistance programs, receive updates from Capitol Hill and the field, and more. Register for the call at: <https://tinyurl.com/ru73qan>

Recording Available of NLIHC June 7 National Call on “HoUSed: Universal, Stable, Affordable Housing”

During the most recent national “HoUSed: Universal, Stable, and Affordable Housing” call, Representative Pramila Jayapal (D-WA) discussed the continued push for affordable housing investments in the infrastructure package. We discussed the need for universal housing assistance, heard the latest developments on the CDC eviction moratorium, learned about new research on the health impacts of evictions on young adults, and heard the latest updates from Capitol Hill and the field.

Representative Jayapal shared statistics on how the pandemic has impacted housing instability and homelessness and discussed the dire need for affordable housing investments in the infrastructure package. The congresswoman announced the June 8 reintroduction the “[Housing is a Human Right Act](#),” co-sponsored by Representatives Jayapal and Grace Meng (D-NY).

Peggy Bailey, senior advisor to the HUD secretary, joined the call to share an overview of the administration’s proposed investments in affordable, accessible housing, and the importance of building a sustainable universal housing voucher program. NLIHC’s Sarah Saadian provided Capitol Hill and HoUSed campaign updates, including the release of Representative Maxine Waters’ discussion draft of the “[Ending Homelessness Act](#).” If enacted, the bill would expand housing vouchers over ten years to reach every eligible renter.

Morgan Hoke and Courtney Boen from the University of Pennsylvania detailed the results of a [study](#) they conducted on the long-term health impacts of evictions on young adults. Caitlin Goldblatt and Tisha Guthrie from Baltimore Renters United and Sybil Hebb from the Oregon Law Center provided field updates. NLIHC President and CEO Diane Yentel gave an update on recent developments in the legal battle over the Center for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC’s) eviction moratorium, following a ruling from the federal appeals court (see *Memo*, [6/7](#)).

NLIHC hosts national calls every week. On today’s call, we will be joined by Senator Chris Van Hollen (D-MD). Register for today’s call (Monday, June 14 at 2:30 pm ET) at: <https://tinyurl.com/ru73qan>

Watch a recording of the June 7 call at: <https://tinyurl.com/2fast2ze>

Access presentation slides at: <https://tinyurl.com/2n7xt3jw>

Emergency Rental Assistance

State Dashboards Can Create Transparency on Spending Trends in Emergency Rental Assistance Programs

Although Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) program websites often contain information on program design, they are less likely to provide real-time information about the extent to which programs are distributing assistance. States can bridge this information gap by providing regularly updated data dashboards or progress reports on how much funding has been disbursed, what it is being used for, and who is receiving it. State programs should share progress with the public to ensure transparency, maintain accountability, and build trust. These dashboards can also help inform mid-course corrections to programs and promote equitable program design and delivery.

At minimum, dashboards should contain basic information on the amount of funding approved and distributed, the number of households that have applied, and the distribution of where applicants are in the application process (denied, in process, approved). Dashboards should also contain the date of the last update. The [Texas Rent Relief](#) dashboard and [New Hampshire Emergency Rental Assistance Program](#) dashboard provide examples of how programs can clearly present this information.

Additional indicators can provide a more in-depth picture of how a program is working, including the average amount of household assistance, amount of funding going toward past versus current and future rent, amount of funding distributed for utilities or relocation expenses, and the reasons applications are denied. Programs should consider sharing aggregated demographic information of ERA recipients, such as race, income, and geography, to inform equitable program design. Programs currently tracking this more detailed information include: [Texas Rent Relief Program](#), [Colorado Emergency Rental Assistance Program](#), [Unite Connecticut](#), and [Maine Housing](#).

NLIHC has identified 13 states that have created live data dashboards or that regularly publish progress reports: Alaska, Arizona, Colorado, Connecticut, Kansas, Maine, Massachusetts, Missouri, Nebraska, New Hampshire, Oklahoma, Texas, and Wyoming. Combined, these 13 states have approved or distributed approximately 11% of their first-round ERA allocations. The amount of overall allocation approved and distributed in each state varies widely, however, from .1% in Wyoming to 25.8% in Texas. On average, programs are paying out \$4,723 per household, though this ranges by state from \$2,630 in Nebraska to \$6,580 in Connecticut. These differences are expected, given the varied costs of living and amount of months covered across states.

In the coming weeks, NLIHC will update the [Treasury Emergency Rental Assistance Dashboard](#) to track state spending and program progress.

Coronavirus, Disasters, Housing, and Homelessness

FEMA Releases New Edition of *Individual Assistance Program and Policy Guide*, Changes Damage Threshold for Recovery Assistance

As part of FEMA’s periodic two-year review process, the agency released a new version of the [Individual Assistance Program and Policy Guide](#) (IAPPG) on May 26. The IAPPG consolidates policy statements for every FEMA Individual Assistance (IA) program, including the Individuals and Households Program (IHP), the Mass Care and Emergency Assistance Programs, Disaster Case Management Program (DCM), and others. Modifications to the IAPPG represent direct changes to FEMA policy immediately implemented upon its release.

The 2021 version of the IAPPG includes numerous modifications to FEMA IA programs. Most of the changes stem from modifications to disaster recovery policy in the 2018 “Disaster Recovery Reform Act (DRRA),” including: allowing properties in areas not approved for assistance by FEMA to receive help if they meet certain eligibility requirements; increasing the financial assistance maximum award for housing and other needs assistance; and establishing FEMA’s ability to waive certain levels of debt owed when the agency provided assistance to individuals later found ineligible.

In addition to the integration of DRRA, the new IAPPG includes other changes. Most importantly, FEMA modified how it measures a disaster survivor’s real property verified loss threshold—the level of damage to a home necessary to establish eligibility for FEMA housing assistance. Previously, the threshold for program eligibility was \$17,000, which often meant that individuals in smaller units or manufactured housing such as mobile homes were often unable to access the program even if their home was rendered unlivable by a disaster. This damage threshold is now set to \$12 in damage per square foot, which means for individuals in a 750 square

foot unit, the threshold is now \$9,000. As a result, more disaster survivors – including those with low-incomes – will be found eligible for this important program.

FEMA modified other portions of the IAPPG, specifically reiterating that service animals must be permitted in emergency shelters and not separated from their owners – something that commonly prevents individuals with disabilities from accessing emergency shelter during a disaster. FEMA also specified that residents of “non-traditional” housing (FEMA’s description for individuals experiencing homelessness who live in tents, shacks, or similar structures) are eligible for reimbursement of hotel costs. FEMA currently offers little assistance to individuals who were experiencing homelessness prior to a disaster, and while this change is a step in the positive direction, individuals experiencing homelessness residing in tents are unlikely to have the resources to pay these upfront costs.

Read the new version of the *Individual Assistance Program and Policy Guide* at: <https://bit.ly/3gdaytS>

Cities and States Use COVID-19 Relief Funds to Expand Tenant Representation

In an effort to expand tenants’ right to counsel and increase access to legal aid, dozens of cities and states across the country are utilizing coronavirus relief funds to provide legal representation for tenants facing eviction. Expanding the right to counsel is necessary to close the gap in legal representation between landlords and tenants.

In anticipation of the expiration of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) eviction moratorium, the Connecticut legislature seeks to enact a statewide right to counsel that would remain in place after federal COVID relief funds run out. Washington State passed a right to counsel bill earlier this year, and Maryland is on track to potentially pass similar legislation.

The National Coalition for a Civil Right to Counsel tracks which states and localities use relief funds to expand tenant access to legal aid. Access the database at: <https://tinyurl.com/2vjhx27t>

HUD PIH Posts Emergency Housing Voucher FAQs

HUD’s Office of Public and Indian Housing (PIH) has posted frequently asked questions (FAQs) about the Emergency Housing Voucher (EHV) program created by the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). Public housing agencies (PHAs) were eligible to apply for 70,000 EHV’s (see *Memo*, [5/10](#)), and PIH announced the EHV allocations available to 696 PHAs (see *Memo*, [5/17](#)).

An [initial FAQ](#) was posted on May 19, and [version 2](#) was posted on May 28. A [third version](#) was posted on June 9. The FAQs and other EHV information is on an [Emergency Housing Voucher website](#). Given the frequency with which the FAQ is updated, residents and advocates will want to check the EHV website periodically. Version 2 added 21 FAQs and Version 3 added 36 FAQs. In total, the postings address 97 FAQs, most of which are technical items only of concern to PHAs.

HUD Secretary Marcia Fudge [announced on June 10 a first tranche of \\$1.1 billion](#) for EHV’s to [626 PHAs](#) (some PHAs did not apply). The \$1.1 billion will cover the cost of EHV’s and related administrative costs, including up-front costs needed to stand up the program, for an initial 18-month period. Thereafter, HUD will provide annual funding to cover the cost of renewals in 12-month increments through September 30, 2030, or until the \$5 billion ARPA allocation runs out, whichever comes first.

NLIHC has [summarized](#) key FAQs that might be of most interest to residents and advocates.

The Emergency Housing Voucher website is at: <https://bit.ly/3wdoeuG>

“Emergency Housing Vouchers, Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) v.3” is at: <https://bit.ly/3cyKqrf>

Updated Brochure Informs HUD Multifamily Tenants about CDC Eviction Moratorium

HUD’s Office of Multifamily Housing Programs (Multifamily) posted an update to “[Addressing Tenant Concerns During the COVID-19 National Emergency](#)” (see *Memo*, 4/27/20). The three-page brochure reminds residents living in private multifamily properties assisted with Section 8 Project-Based Rental Assistance (PBRA) that they should continue paying rent if they can, but if their income has decreased, they should contact property management right away and request an income recertification. If a resident does not have rental assistance but lives in an FHA-insured property, the resident is urged to contact the landlord immediately to discuss a potential payment plan.

The updated brochure eliminates the previous version’s details about the CARES Act eviction moratorium and adds material about the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Eviction Moratorium, which expires on June 30. On the cover page, Multifamily encourages property owners and management agents to inform residents about the eviction protections and encourages owners and managers to inform residents about the required CDC declaration form. Detailed information about the CDC declaration form is on the second page.

The brochure includes advice for residents who are having trouble paying rent. Tenants who have had a decrease in income should ask their property manager for an income recertification as soon as possible, as they should be entitled to a rent reduction or a hardship exemption that takes effect the first month after their income declines. The brochure clarifies that federal stimulus payments are not included in income calculations. Multifamily also informs tenants that they may qualify for newly available rent assistance from the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP).

The brochure reminds tenants that if their state or local government has eviction protections in place that provide the same or greater public health protections as the CDC order, the state or local protections supersede the CDC order. If there are state or local eviction protections that continue after the CDC order ends on June 30, these state or local protections will still apply.

Multifamily warns residents that once the temporary halt on evictions ends, they can be evicted for nonpayment of rent. However, the brochure states that until further notice, owners of HUD-assisted or FHA-insured properties who receive mortgage forbearance from their lender must continue to provide at least 30 days’ notice of eviction, or more if required by state or local law. Tenants are encouraged to contact their landlord regarding income recertification (if their income has fallen) or a payment agreement that might help them avoid an eviction once the moratorium ends.

If a resident is concerned about the condition of their home, they should contact their Project-Based Contract Administrator (PBCA) or Regional HUD Office. Attached to the brochure is a list of PBCAs and their phone numbers in each state.

Read “Addressing Tenant Concerns During the COVID-19 National Emergency” at: <https://bit.ly/3zdgmel>

More Information about the Section 8 project-based housing program is on [page 4-64](#) of NLIHC’s 2021 *Advocates’ Guide*.

Additional Coronavirus Updates – June 14, 2021

National Updates

Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

HUD's Office of Public and Indian Housing [updated](#) its [Eviction Prevention and Stability Toolkit](#) on June 2 to reflect the latest CDC guidance (see *Memo*, [6/7](#)).

Federal Housing Finance Agency

The Federal Housing Finance Agency (FHFA) [announced](#) on June 3 that Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac will continue to offer COVID-19 forbearance to qualifying multifamily property owners through September 30, 2021, subject to the continued tenant protections FHFA has imposed during the pandemic (see *Memo*, [6/7](#)).

Reporting

[Time](#) outlines what people need to know about the federal eviction moratorium, which is set to expire June 30, and explains how renters can access over \$46 billion in federal rental assistance. "The challenge now is to get that money to the lowest income renters and the small landlords who need it...before the eviction moratorium expires," says NLIHC President and CEO Diane Yentel.

The [Wall Street Journal](#) reports that strict eligibility rules and overburdened local officials are preventing much of the \$46 billion in federal rental assistance from reaching struggling renters. While Treasury released [guidance](#) in May to expedite payments by loosening documentation requirements and allowing direct-to-tenant aid, [research from NLIHC](#) shows that many local governments have been slow to act.

[Reuters](#) reports a group of landlords filed an [emergency petition](#) on June 3 urging the U.S. Supreme Court to end the federal eviction moratorium issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). NLIHC's Diane Yentel noted that if landlord groups "spent even a quarter of [their] effort instead convincing landlords to apply for and accept the money, maybe they wouldn't feel such a pressing need to evict low-income tenants who fell behind on rent during the global pandemic."

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia on June 2 [denied a request](#) by the Alabama Association of Realtors to lift the stay of a lower court ruling overturning the CDC eviction moratorium. NLIHC President and CEO Diane Yentel referred to the landlords' appeal as "astonishing," given the \$50 billion in federal emergency rental assistance made available by Congress.

"It's something of a race against the clock at this point to get these historic emergency rental assistance funds to the lowest-income and most marginalized, most vulnerable tenants," NLIHC's Diane Yentel told [CNN Newssource](#).

As the federal eviction moratorium nears its end, [Route Fifty](#) reports that some states and localities are extending their eviction moratoriums as they scramble to distribute emergency rental assistance (ERA). NLIHC Policy Analyst Kim Johnson says jurisdictions are working to balance the need to distribute aid quickly with a desire to incorporate equity in the process to ensure the hardest-hit households can access the funds.

NLIHC Vice President of Research Andrew Aurand spoke to [Marketplace](#) about the nearly 400 rent relief programs currently accepting applications and the barriers to distributing money quickly.

[CNBC](#) reports that states are speeding up distribution of more than \$46 billion in federal emergency rental assistance (ERA). NLIHC's Andrew Aurand spoke to [CNBC](#) about ERA programs and barriers to distributing these critical funds.

[CNBC](#) reports that more than 10 million people, or 14% of renters, in the U.S. are behind on housing payments, according to an analysis by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. With so many renters still behind on rent, the expiration of the federal eviction moratorium on June 30 could result in a wave of evictions.

[NPR](#) reports on a [study](#) from the Private Equity Stakeholder Project, which found that Pretium Partners, a corporate landlord, has filed four times as many evictions in predominantly Black counties in Georgia than it has in white counties in Florida.

An article in [Time](#) reports the United States may soon face a wave of single mothers being evicted. The article describes the need to use the most effective form of homelessness prevention to address the looming crisis: expanding housing vouchers.

State and Local News

Alaska

[Over 25,000 renters](#) and 8,000 landlords are enrolled in [Alaska Housing Rent Relief](#). More than 25,000 applications have passed identification and income verification, and each one has been assigned to nonprofit community partners. To date, over 12,000 applications have been approved for a total of \$39 million in payments made to landlords and utility companies.

California

Governor Gavin Newsom sent a [letter](#) to FEMA Administrator Deanne Criswell requesting a continuation of FEMA's 100% cost-share reimbursement for Project Roomkey through at least June 30, 2022.

Governor Gavin Newsom proposed \$12 billion in new funding to move people experiencing homelessness into housing, including [\\$8.75 billion to expand Project Homekey](#), a program to convert hotel and motel rooms and other properties into housing. According to state officials, \$800 million spent on Project Homekey last year created 6,000 housing units from hotels, motels, and other repurposed properties, providing shelter for 8,200 people.

Using Project Homekey funds, [San Mateo County](#) purchased three locations to convert into housing for people experiencing homelessness.

An op-ed in the [Los Angeles Times](#) outlines why the COVID-19 emergency is far from over for vulnerable renters. In California, out of the \$355 million in federal emergency rental assistance, only \$20 million of rent relief has been approved and \$1 million paid out.

Florida

[Spectrum News](#) reports that many Florida landlords are refusing to accept federal emergency rental assistance (ERA). Landlords' refusal to participate in ERA programs is complicating the distribution of billions of dollars in critical aid. "It's not happening fast enough to prevent a potentially historic wave of evictions in July if the moratorium expires and these funds haven't been expended," said Diane Yentel, president and CEO of NLIHC.

Months after the City of Jacksonville received \$29 million in federal emergency rental and utility assistance, [thousands of tenants](#) are still waiting for their applications to be processed and approved. United Way of Northeast Florida is tasked with distributing the majority of the funds – \$23 million. So far, the organization has paid just over \$1 million to nearly 300 families, leaving more than 2,600 applications pending and \$20 million left to pay out.

Georgia

The [Atlanta Journal-Constitution](#) reports that DeKalb County has distributed only 3.5% of the \$21 million it set aside earlier this year for emergency rental assistance. Advocates and some county leaders are asking DeKalb officials to reconsider their strategy and act with greater urgency.

Amid the pandemic, [HOPE Atlanta](#) has expanded services for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness. According to HOPE Atlanta, calls for housing assistance have tripled, and the need for food assistance skyrocketed 800%.

Hawaii

Hawaii Governor David Ige on June 7 [extended the statewide eviction moratorium](#) for two months, but he does not expect to extend it past August 6. “We are asking all of the advocates and stakeholders to help us implement the mediation programs and really help as many people as we can in that window,” said Governor Ige.

Idaho

Tenant advocates have seen an increase in [informal evictions throughout Idaho](#) during the pandemic. More and more landlords are not renewing leases or increasing rent at the end of the lease term, forcing tenants from their homes. Idahoans in need of rental assistance can [apply here](#).

Massachusetts

An op-ed in the [Boston Globe](#) urges legislators to prevent a wave of evictions and foreclosures with emergency measures based on the COVID-19 Housing Equity Bill. More than 16,000 evictions have been filed in Massachusetts during the pandemic, disproportionately harming low-income renters and people of color. The author emphasizes that extending eviction protections is critical as the state of emergency is set to end.

Michigan

The Michigan State Housing Development Authority reports it has spent [\\$42 million of the \\$282 million](#) in federal rental assistance the [legislature appropriated in March](#), with the other \$340 million to be appropriated at a later date. The agency has approved 6,000 of the 32,000 applications it has received for the [COVID Emergency Rental Assistance program](#).

New Jersey

[NorthJersey.com](#) reports that tenant lawyers are seeing an increase in landlords filing lawsuits in civil courts against tenants to recoup rental payments. Tenant advocates anticipate the state will see a sustained increase in such civil cases as legislators debate a deal to end the eviction moratorium.

New York

[WYNC](#) reports that New York City is preparing to move New Yorkers experiencing homelessness who are currently living in hotels back into congregate shelters. A letter from the city says individuals will be moving back into congregate shelters soon but did not provide a specific timeline. NLIHC President and CEO Diane Yentel noted on [Twitter](#) that FEMA provides 100% reimbursement for eligible non-congregate sheltering costs through September. Additionally, HUD recently allocated \$5 billion in emergency housing vouchers for people who are homeless.

[BK Reader](#) reports the New York City Council passed [legislation](#) that will significantly increase the ability of New Yorkers experiencing homelessness to find housing through CityFHEPS, the city’s rental voucher program.

Oregon

With Oregon’s eviction moratorium set to expire at the end of June, state Representative Pam Marsh is [spreading awareness](#) about two emergency rental assistance programs to help struggling tenants and landlords: the [Oregon Emergency Rental Assistance Program](#) and the [Landlord Compensation Fund](#).

South Carolina

The [Post and Courier](#) reports that the South Carolina State Housing Finance and Development Authority has not distributed any of the \$271 million it received for federal rent and utility assistance. The authority started taking applications the first week in May and is currently processing about 5,000 applications, but it has not yet distributed any aid.

Texas

[Marketplace](#) reports that some Houston landlords refuse to participate in rent relief programs, noting that “some landlords would rather evict than deal with delays and red tape.”

Washington

The [Spokesman-Review](#) reports the city of Spokane has opened \$6 million in federal rental assistance, as the state and federal eviction moratoriums are set to expire on June 30. The city’s rental assistance funding is divided among programs focused on different groups of renters within city borders – any household; households with minor children at risk of homelessness; landlords; and Black, Indigenous and people of color.

Washington, DC

A [Washington Post](#) analysis reveals that at least \$300 million in federal emergency rental assistance (ERA) remains unspent even as the federal eviction moratorium is set to expire at the end of this month. As of May 5, five of the 15 nearby counties, including the most populous counties in Maryland and Virginia, had not sent any federal money to renters. As of May 30, D.C. has spent \$10.5 million (about 5%) of the first \$200 million allocated for tenants at risk of eviction.

Guidance

Department of Housing and Urban Development

[HUD Emergency Housing Vouchers: Frequently Asked Questions](#) – Updated June 2, 2021

[HUD and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services \(HHS\) COVID-19 Vaccinations and Testing Toolkit](#) – June 2021

[CDBG-CV Toolkit](#) (see *Memo*, [6/7](#))

[State CDBG-CV Implementation Quick Guide](#) – May 2021

[CDC Eviction Moratorium FAQs for HUD’s Office of Public and Indian Housing](#) – May 26, 2021

[COVID-19 Homeless System Response: ESG-CV Advancing Strategies](#) – May 2021

Department of Treasury

[Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds: Frequently Asked Questions](#) – Updated May 27, 2021

FEMA

Disaster Housing Recovery Updates – June 14, 2021

The NLIHC-led Disaster Housing Recovery Coalition convenes and supports disaster-impacted communities to ensure that federal disaster recovery efforts reach all impacted households, including the lowest-income and most marginalized people who are often the hardest-hit by disasters and have the fewest resources to recover.

Learn more about the DHRC's policy recommendations [here](#).

Hurricanes

After visiting her grandmother in Puerto Rico, Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-NY) [tweeted about the ongoing impact of Hurricane Maria](#), highlighting that the Trump administration blocked billions in disaster funding. “Hurricane María relief hasn’t arrived. Trump blocked relief \$ for PR. People are being forced to flee ancestral homes, & developers are taking them,” Representative Ocasio-Cortez [tweeted](#). Hurricane Maria decimated Puerto Rico's infrastructure, destroying power lines, hospitals, and clean water sources. Congress allocated more than \$60 billion to rebuild Puerto Rico after the hurricane, but so far only a fraction of that amount has been released. The [Biden administration](#) in April announced the obligation of \$8.2 billion in CDBG-MIT funding approved for Puerto Rico almost two years ago and removed onerous restrictions that limited the island's access to the funds.

The working-class community that helps keep Florida Keys restaurants and hotels running is [still recovering from Hurricane Irma](#) nearly four years later. The Florida Keys Community Land Trust was founded after Irma to create income-based, affordable housing.

Severe Storms, Tornadoes, and Flooding

[Dayton Daily News](#) reports that two years after a powerful EF4 tornado ripped through Trotwood, Ohio, an apartment complex that housed 430 units remains in ruins. The delay in rebuilding stands in sharp contrast to nearby Westbrooke Village, which has been rebuilt and reoccupied. About 1,800 residents of multifamily housing units in Trotwood were displaced by the tornadoes, creating a housing deficit for the city.

FEMA [announced](#) that federal disaster assistance has been made available to Louisiana to supplement state and local recovery efforts in the areas affected by severe storms, tornadoes, and flooding from May 17-21, 2021. President Biden's major disaster declaration makes FEMA's Individual Assistance available to affected individuals in Ascension, Calcasieu, East Baton Rouge, Iberville, and Lafayette parishes.

FEMA [announced](#) that Pennsylvania released a new [mobile tool](#) that provides the latest flood mapping information. The [PA Flood Risk Tool](#) is designed to provide floodplain managers, insurance agents, developers, real estate agents, local planners, and citizens with a clear picture of flood risk for a specific area or property.

Wildfires

[High Country News](#) spotlights Oregon's Project Turnkey, a \$65 million statewide initiative to convert hotels and motels into housing for survivors of the September 2020 wildfires, as well as other people experiencing

homelessness. The Redwood Inn is one of as many as 20 motels that the state plans to buy by the end of June. The City of Medford and Rogue Retreat, a nonprofit, received \$2.5 million to purchase the Redwood Inn. The project first prioritizes wildfire survivors and will later house other people experiencing homelessness. Wildfires disproportionately harm marginalized communities, whose members are often left with few resources following climate-related disasters. Of the nearly 2,500 homes destroyed by last year's fires in Jackson County, 60% were mobile homes.

[Seventeen trailers](#) will be set up at a site in Rainbow, Oregon to provide temporary housing for survivors of last year's devastating Holiday Farm Fire. The temporary housing, provided by FEMA, will be available for 18 months from the start of the disaster (not from the date the homes are made available). More than 100 Oregon families are waiting to be placed into temporary housing due to the wildfires.

Budget and Appropriations

Senate Subcommittee Holds Hearing on HUD FY22 Budget Request

The Senate Appropriations Subcommittee for Transportation and Housing and Urban Development (THUD) held a remote hearing on June 10 to discuss the president's budget request for fiscal year 2022 (FY22) HUD budget. HUD Secretary Marcia Fudge answered questions regarding the president's budget request and the American Jobs Plan Act.

In her opening statement, Secretary Fudge stated that the budget request "tells the American people this administration views housing as a foundational platform to help address the most urgent challenges for our nation—to provide security and stability for those who live on the outskirts of hope; to advance opportunity and equity on behalf of marginalized communities, and to meet the existential threats posed by natural disasters and climate change."

Several subcommittee members raised concerns about HUD's staffing capacity and skill gap. According to the president's [budget request](#), HUD's full-time staff declined 20% between 2012 and 2019. Although waivers have expedited the hiring process and resources towards staffing have increased, attrition has resulted in the loss of expert staff and imbalances in some program offices. The decline of staff and expertise has caused staff to be overworked and resulted in a skills gap in administering contracts. Staffing shortages also relate to the subcommittee's cybersecurity concerns, as HUD has been targeted in recent hacking attempts. Secretary Fudge informed the subcommittee that staffing is a high priority for the agency and that funds allocated in the budget request will support increases in hiring and IT.

Chairman Brian Schatz (D-HI) and Ranking Member Susan Collins (R-ME) shared concerns about veteran homelessness. Regarding the Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) program, Chairman Schatz discussed how 24,000 vouchers have remained unreleased. Secretary Fudge responded that the supply of housing remains low for veterans and low-income families, exacerbated by capacity issues at Veteran Affairs and HUD due to declines in staff across agencies. Secretary Fudge assured the senators that HUD is examining best practices moving forward.

When Senator Joe Manchin (D-WV) raised concerns about discrepancies between the McKinney-Vento and HUD youth homelessness data, Secretary Fudge explained that HUD will combine the datasets to address youth homelessness going forward.

Secretary Fudge expressed a commitment to work with subcommittee members to address their concerns, including addressing rural, senior, and tribal housing, supply of affordable housing, addressing discriminatory housing practices, FHA, and CDBG-DR issues.

Watch the full hearing at: <https://bit.ly/3iw3HNS>

Read NLIHC's analysis of the president's budget request at: <https://bit.ly/3wg1wC9>

View NLIHC's updated budget chart at: <https://tinyurl.com/cdkvy5b7>

Congress

Senate Confirms Adrienne Todman as Deputy Secretary of HUD

Adrienne Todman was confirmed as deputy secretary of HUD by a voice vote in the Senate on June 10. Ms. Todman brings years of housing and community development experience from her extensive career in the field, most recently as CEO of the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (NAHRO). Before joining NAHRO in 2017, she served as executive director of the District of Columbia Housing Authority (DCHA). Ms. Todman has also served in various career positions at HUD, first as a manager of a \$500 million grant competition focused on the redevelopment of distressed public housing sites, then as a policy aide in both the Office of Public and Indian Housing and the Office of the Secretary. Ms. Todman will be the first Black woman to serve as deputy secretary of HUD.

NLIHC congratulates Adrienne Todman on her confirmation as deputy secretary. She will help lead HUD during a crucial time filled with historic challenges. The coronavirus pandemic has caused extraordinary hardship for the nation's lowest-income renters and people experiencing homelessness. NLIHC looks forward to working closely with Deputy Secretary Todman to end homelessness and housing poverty in America.

A recording of Adrienne Todman's confirmation hearing is at the Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs' website: <https://bit.ly/3uNffiS>

Read NLIHC's letter of support for Adrienne Todman's nomination at: <https://bit.ly/3brGoAk>

"Supplemental Security Income Restoration Act" Reintroduced

Representatives Jan Schakowsky (D-IL), Raúl Grijalva (D-AZ), and Elissa Slotkin (D-MI) reintroduced on June 8 the "Supplemental Security Income (SSI) Restoration Act" ([H.R. 3763](#)). If enacted, the bill would keep the over 8 million Americans who receive SSI benefits from falling below the poverty line by simplifying the SSI claiming process, expanding resources and income limits, setting the minimum benefit at 100% of the federal poverty level, and eliminating punitive reductions in benefits. Currently, the complicated claims process makes it difficult for those in need to receive benefits, and those who are able to access assistance do not receive a livable income.

"Supplemental Security Income is an economic lifeline for over eight million seniors, people with disabilities, and families who rely on the program to survive," said Representative Schakowsky. "Unfortunately, the income requirements and benefit amounts are operating as if it were still 1972. The financial requirements are so stiff that a growing number of seniors on SSI are homeless. This is unacceptable and even more disturbing when you consider that more than three out of five older adults who rely on SSI are women. As we work to end the COVID-19 pandemic, updating the SSI program is even more essential. The time is now!"

"SSI has long been a last resort and a critical safety net for keeping seniors and those with disabilities from falling into poverty," said Representative Grijalva. "It's ridiculous that for almost fifty years, we have largely

failed to make basic updates to ensure the program does what it was intended to do – meet basic needs for blind, disabled, and aged people who will otherwise go without. The last year has been especially harsh on these vulnerable populations, and it is time that Congress step up to make these modest but necessary updates to the program.”

“I’ve met with families across my district who depend on SSI to meet their most basic needs,” said Representative Slotkin. “For all the benefits this program has provided, it’s been largely unchanged since its inception in 1972, so the hurdles and restrictions to accessing these benefits are often outdated and burdensome. The SSI Restoration Act is a common-sense approach to help families support independent living of individuals with disabilities and to better enable individuals with disabilities to be independent and work without fear of losing benefits.”

Senator Sherrod Brown (D-OH) is set to introduce companion legislation in the Senate.

Learn more about the bill at: <https://tinyurl.com/3sn659ma>

View the full press release at: <https://tinyurl.com/j7s6e4rt>

HUD

HUD’s Interim Final Rule Reinstating AFFH Definition Published in *Federal Register*

HUD’s [Interim Final Rule](#) on Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH) was published in the *Federal Register* on June 10. The rule will restore the statutory definition of AFFH and some certifications that were removed from the 2015 AFFH rule by the previous administration (see *Memo*, [07/27/2020](#)). The new rule will go into effect on July 31. The rule does not reinstate the 2015 rule’s procedural provisions that governed how HUD grantees conducted fair housing planning and how HUD reviews their planning work. The new rule does not require any specific fair housing planning process, but instead requires grantees to certify they are meeting the Fair Housing Act’s AFFH obligation. HUD plans to provide technical assistance for grantees that want help with fair housing planning to support certifications.

This publication of the Interim Final Rule was timed to take place before a significant number of program participants (e.g., CDBG grantees) must certify compliance and file certain program planning documents with HUD by August 16. The rule will require HUD grantees to certify that they will affirmatively further fair housing, to be defined as “taking meaningful actions that, taken together, address significant disparities in housing needs and in access to opportunity, replacing segregated living patterns with racially balanced living patterns, transforming racially or ethnically concentrated areas of poverty into areas of opportunity, and fostering and maintaining compliance with civil rights and fair housing.” The Interim Final Rule restores most of the “meaningful action” definition, which was removed by the previous administration’s “[Preserving Community and Neighborhood Choice](#)” rule.

When the rule was published, HUD also returned technical assistance materials for voluntary fair housing planning by HUD grantees to its [AFFH site](#). While HUD does not require grantees to participate in the fair housing planning process, the department strongly encourages grantees to engage in familiar fair housing processes such as continuing to implement a completed Analysis of Impediments (AI) or an Assessment of Fair Housing (AFH); update an existing AI or AFH; or conduct a new AI or AFH. The [AFFH Data and Mapping Tool](#) (AFFH-T) is a publicly available, interactive tool that provides access to HUD data that can be used to support fair housing planning and assess and analyze fair housing issues in jurisdictions.

A 30-day public comment period opened on June 10, and HUD will consider changes before the rules effective date on July 31 based on the comments it receives. If you would like to make comments, visit: [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov)

HUD Secretary Marcia Fudge stated in recent [article](#) that the department will issue a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) to create a new framework for grantees to achieve fair housing outcomes. “The publication of this interim rule is a significant first step in HUD’s efforts to fully enforce our duties under the Fair Housing Act. Our department is embarking on a process to design an additional, comprehensive rule that gives communities further tools and guidance. We will gather input from a wide range of sources — including civil rights organizations, elected officials, federal agencies, housing providers, policymakers, and members of the public. Once that process is complete, we plan to issue a final rule that responds to their valuable advice and provides clarity for all our stakeholders.”

This Interim Final Rule is a strong first step. NLIHC anticipates that the administration will do more to ensure that grantees are meeting the obligation in the Fair Housing Act to affirmatively further fair housing. We look forward to engaging with HUD staff in this process.

Read HUD’s Interim Final Rule on “Restoring Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing Definitions and Certifications” in the *Federal Register* at: <https://bit.ly/3gq4Pjp>

An easy-to-read version can be found at: <https://bit.ly/2ShOANv>

Read HUD’s Press release on the Interim Final Rule at: <https://bit.ly/3cz0tW6>

More information about AFFH is on pages [7-14](#) and [7-17](#) of NLIHC’s *2021 Advocates’ Guide*.

Opportunity Starts at Home

Bipartisan “Family Stability and Opportunity Vouchers Act” Reintroduced in Senate

Senators Chris Van Hollen (D-MD) and Todd Young (R-IN) on June 9 reintroduced the “[Family Stability and Opportunity Vouchers Act](#),” which would create an additional 500,000 housing vouchers specifically designed for low-income families with young children to expand access to neighborhoods of opportunity with high-performing schools, strong job prospects, and other resources. The legislation would largely eliminate homelessness among families with young children, as well as substantially reduce the number of children growing up in areas of concentrated poverty. The policy solution has been championed by the [Opportunity Starts at Home](#) campaign, which worked with the bill’s sponsors to shape the legislation.

The bill would prioritize new vouchers for low-income pregnant women and families with children under age 6 who have a recent history of homelessness or housing instability, live in an area of concentrated poverty, or are at risk of being displaced from an opportunity area. The new vouchers would be coupled with counseling and services that have a proven track record of supporting parents and helping families move out of neighborhoods of concentrated poverty. The half-million new vouchers created through this legislation would be phased in over five years at 100,000 per year.

Research shows that when children in poor families grow up in neighborhoods with low poverty, high quality schools, and low crime, they are significantly more likely to attend college, less likely to become single parents, and likely to earn more as adults over the course of their lifetimes. This helps break the cycle of generational poverty and produces a positive taxpayer return. Research also shows that low-income students perform better academically and close achievement gaps faster when housing assistance enables them to live stably in opportunity neighborhoods with lower-poverty schools.

Campaign Leaders Support the Legislation

“Low-income children facing housing instability and growing up in neighborhoods of extreme poverty are more likely to struggle in school, more likely to experience adverse health outcomes, and less likely to climb the income ladder as adults,” said Mike Koprowski, national director of the *Opportunity Starts at Home* campaign. “Research clearly shows that Family Stability and Opportunity Vouchers can dramatically improve the life trajectories of low-income children by expanding access to stable, affordable housing located in safe, well-resourced communities. This legislation contains one of the most research-based and cost-effective policy tools available to the federal government to dramatically improve upward mobility for the next generation.”

“Even before the pandemic, our nation was in the grips of an affordable housing crisis that forced three out of every four of America’s lowest-income families to make impossible tradeoffs between paying rent and putting groceries on the table or meeting their other basic needs,” said Diane Yentel, president and CEO of NLIHC. “Ongoing structural racism, discrimination, and segregation in our communities exacerbates the challenges, impacting health outcomes, educational attainment, in some cases, life expectancy. The Family Stability and Opportunity Vouchers Act is a critical first step toward housing justice by providing 500,000 families with young children the breadth of opportunities that start with affordable homes in safe, thriving communities with access to good schools, jobs, healthcare, and transit.”

Sharon Parrott, president of the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, offered additional support: “The Family Stability and Opportunity Vouchers Act that Senators Van Hollen and Young introduced would protect many young children from hardship and provide critical resources they need to thrive, by helping their families afford stable homes in a neighborhood they choose. It’s a well-designed, evidence-based initiative that would make a real difference in the lives of hundreds of thousands of children in families with incomes below the poverty line.”

“Early childhood is a critical window of brain and body development. Our Children’s HealthWatch research and my experience as a pediatrician show a stable home early in life is the foundation for good health,” said Dr. Megan Sandel, pediatrician and co-lead principal investigator for Children’s HealthWatch. “Family Stability and Opportunity Vouchers give children and families a fair shot at healthy development during this important period and will have a positive impact on health for generations to come.”

“This bill will allow families with low-wages or unreliable incomes to stay stably housed and avoid homelessness,” said Nan Roman, president and CEO of the National Alliance to End Homelessness. “We are grateful to Senators Young and Van Hollen for their vision and compassion. Children who are helped by this program will benefit throughout their lives.”

“We commend Senators Van Hollen and Young for this crucial bipartisan legislation to provide more options for safe and secure rental housing during this time when the affordable housing stock is decreasing, and families of every racial and ethnic minority are struggling,” said Hilary Shelton, director of the NAACP Washington Bureau and the senior vice president for policy and advocacy. “Housing stability has numerous benefits for children and families. We look forward to working together to ensure this bill becomes a much-needed reality.”

“Finding affordable and stable housing is intrinsically linked to a family’s ability to meet all its basic needs, including putting food on the table,” said Luis Guardia, president of the Food Research & Action Center. “The Family Stability and Opportunity Vouchers Act represents good public policy with positive ripple effects. Not only does the Act work to house low-income families with young children in neighborhoods with strong schools, better job prospects, and community assets like healthy food retail outlets, but it safeguards families from the multiple harms to nutrition, health and well-being emanating from homelessness, unaffordable housing and housing instability. These types of policies are especially important during this unprecedented pandemic and its associated economic shocks, which are disproportionately impacting Brown and Black households.”

“The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) applauds and fully supports Senators Chris Van Hollen and Todd Young in their bipartisan introduction of the Family Stability and Opportunity Vouchers Act that would create 500,000 new housing vouchers,” said Dr. Angelo McClain, CEO of NASW. “As the nation’s largest professional social work organization, we are well aware of the fact that the most important support service for low-income families is safe and affordable housing. Therefore, we welcome this legislation that will significantly increase the availability of housing vouchers and help to end the cycle of homelessness low-income families with young children too often experience. The bill will also give these families access to neighborhoods where there are better opportunities – communities with stronger schools, better job prospects, and more readily available services to meet their basic bio-psychosocial needs. NASW stands with the *Opportunity Starts at Home* campaign in supporting the Family Stability and Opportunity Vouchers Act and will offer our resources to help with its passage.”

“The Family Stability and Opportunity Vouchers Act will expand assistance targeted to families urgently in need and prove that poverty is a cycle that can be broken,” said Jessica Love, executive director of Prosperity Indiana and state partner of the *Opportunity Starts at Home* campaign. “Our network enthusiastically supports this bill and applauds Senators Young and Van Hollen for their leadership in working to ensure housing unstable families and children in our state and across the country have more equitable opportunities to thrive in all facets of life.”

Tell Congress to enact this critical bipartisan legislation by sending a pre-formatted letter [here](#).

Read the press release from Senator Van Hollen, which includes quotes from Diane Yentel, president and CEO of the National Low Income Housing Coalition and Mike Koprowski, national campaign director [here](#).

Follow the *Opportunity Starts at Home* campaign on social media: [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), and [LinkedIn](#). Be sure to [sign up](#) for our e-newsletter to get the latest updates about the campaign, including new multi-sector partners, [calls to action](#), events, and [research](#).

Research

New Research on Homelessness Reveals Long-term Economic Hardship, Relatively Little Interstate Mobility

A working paper from scholars at the University of Chicago and the U.S. Census Bureau, “[Learning about homelessness using linked survey and administrative data](#),” connects multiple large data sources to create a clearer picture of the characteristics, employment, income, and safety-net participation by people experiencing homelessness. People who experienced homelessness had lower earnings over a ten-year period than those in a “poor” (i.e. impoverished) but housed comparison group, suggesting homelessness is a symptom of long-term low material well-being. The research finds that people experiencing sheltered homelessness are no more likely than the general population to be from out of state—indicating they are usually longtime local residents unable to afford housing.

The authors draw on restricted-use 2010 Decennial Census (which estimates sheltered and unsheltered homelessness) and 2006-2018 *American Community Survey* (ACS) one-year data (which include interviews with several thousand people residing in emergency and temporary shelters). They also examined Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) data on homeless services provision, HUD annual point-in-time (PIT) estimates, IRS tax forms, and housing assistance administrative records.

The authors compare characteristics of people experiencing sheltered homelessness with the general population and a comparison group of poor households with a single adult not experiencing homelessness. Among findings for the 2011-2018 period:

- Over 60% of people experiencing sheltered homelessness were male, 12 percentage points higher than the general population and nearly 20 percentage points higher than the poor comparison group. A smaller share of people experiencing sheltered homelessness were children (13%) relative to the poor comparison group (38%).
- Nearly 47% of people experiencing sheltered homelessness were Black, compared to just 30% of the poor comparison group and 13% of the general population. American Indian/Alaska Natives were also overrepresented compared to the poor comparison group.
- People experiencing sheltered homelessness were more likely (36%) than the poor housed comparison group (23%) to experience at least one severe physical or cognitive functional limitation.
- Sheltered homeless adults were more likely to reside in their state of birth (55%) than the general population (52%).

Analysis of income and access to safety-net programs showed that people experiencing homelessness suffer substantial long-term material deprivation. To make this comparison, the authors compared individuals identified as homeless in the 2010 Census with a poor comparison group from the 2010 ACS. Linked administrative datasets allowed the authors to track individual longitudinal income and programs received between 2003 and 2016. Findings included:

- In 2010, 52.8% of people experiencing sheltered homelessness and 40.4% of people experiencing unsheltered homelessness appear to have earned income. Despite this high rate of formal employment, their earnings were significantly less than for the poor comparison group across the entire period of observation.
- Most people experiencing homelessness received some form of social safety net program. In 2010, 88.8% of people experiencing sheltered homelessness and 78.1% of people experiencing unsheltered homelessness received at least one of the tracked benefits (SNAP, VA, HUD housing assistance, Medicare, or Medicaid).
- About one-tenth of people experiencing homelessness received a housing benefit in 2010, compared to 19% of the poor comparison group (11.1% of those who were sheltered and 10.4% of those who were unsheltered). Prior to 2010, the people who were observed to be experiencing homelessness in 2010 were about 5-9 percentage points less likely than the poor comparison group to be receiving housing assistance.
- People experiencing sheltered homelessness had higher rates of program participation than those experiencing unsheltered homelessness, which may be partly due to shelter services and partly due to characteristics of people who elect to enter a shelter.

Read the paper at: <https://bit.ly/3g6w6Zd>

Eviction Filings Continued in Low-Income BIPOC Communities in Atlanta-Area Despite CDC Eviction Moratorium

A Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta report, "[Special Briefing: Despite CDC Moratorium, Atlanta-Area Eviction Filings Hit Low-Income, Minority Neighborhoods](#)," examines eviction filings in Atlanta between April 2020 and April 2021. Despite the CDC eviction moratorium issued in September 2020, eviction filings continued in Atlanta-area "hot spots"—census tracts which have a majority BIPOC population and a median income between 42% and 92% of the area median income (AMI). The study found that fewer evictions were filed during the

CARES Act eviction moratorium (March 2020-July 2020) than during the CDC moratorium (September 2020-June 2021), despite broader protections for renters under the second moratorium.

The brief analyzes patterns of eviction filings in five counties in the Atlanta area—Clayton, Cobb, DeKalb, Fulton, and Gwinnett—from the start of the pandemic in early 2020 through April 2021. Fulton county evictions were reported only until September 2020. These five counties account for 63% of the Atlanta metro population and 74% of its occupied rental units. Overall, evictions dropped rapidly from April 2020 until July 2020. In part, this decrease may be due to the CARES Act eviction moratorium, which prohibited evictions from rental units receiving federal support and a Georgia Supreme Court order that temporarily lifted deadlines for tenants to respond to eviction lawsuits. Evictions began picking up in July 2020 before leveling off at around 7,000-8,000 evictions per month in September 2020. Filings remained around this level until April 2021.

Most eviction filings early in the pandemic occurred in hot spots in southern Fulton, southern DeKalb, and Clayton counties. These same hot spots continued to experience high rates of eviction filings until April 2021. Each neighborhood's racial composition and median income was a strong indicator of pandemic eviction filings. Eviction filings were much higher in census tracts with over 50% Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) population and less than 80% AMI, a trend that existed before the pandemic as well, but has been exacerbated since.

In the census tracts with the highest eviction filing rates, the population was 75% BIPOC, and 9 out of 10 neighborhoods had a median income less than 80% of the area median income. Half had median incomes less than 50% AMI. Additionally, when comparing data from earlier in the pandemic to later, eviction filing rates grew. In one especially hard-hit census tract in Clayton County the rate was 2.5 times higher in April 2021 than in September 2020.

Eviction filings in low-income, predominantly BIPOC neighborhoods were much more prevalent than in higher-income, predominantly white neighborhoods, and these rates have sped up during the pandemic.

Read the brief at: <https://bit.ly/3v5I6hS>

Fact of the Week

Research Debunks Stereotype that People Cross State Lines for Homeless Services



Source: Meyer et al. (2021), "Learning about Homelessness Using Linked Survey and Administrative Data." 2011-2018 restricted-use American Community Survey data.



From the Field

Nevada Advocates Secure Wins in 2021 Legislative Session

Affordable housing and homelessness advocates in Nevada secured significant victories in the state legislature during the 2021 session. The new state policies address equitable housing access, expand tenant protections, and mitigate the risk of homelessness for Nevadans facing eviction due to the current economic crisis.

Homelessness and housing groups across the state were active throughout the session and worked to advance these policy priorities. The Nevada Homeless Alliance, the Nevada Housing Coalition, and Faith in Action Nevada hosted a virtual Homelessness and Housing Awareness Day event on April 5 with over 50 advocates, including people directly impacted by homelessness and housing instability. These and other groups, including the Nevada Coalition of Legal Service Providers, the Nevada Policy Council on Homelessness and the Nevada Partnership for Homeless Youth, championed legislation and led advocacy efforts throughout the session.

The COVID-19 pandemic has negatively impacted Nevadans’ housing and economic stability. Advocates worked with legislators to introduce several bills to mitigate COVID-related evictions and to address long-standing policy issues related to affordable housing production and preservation. Advocates also worked to advance equitable housing policy to remove housing barriers for renters with a conviction history and who utilize housing subsidies. Additionally, a special focus was put on improving access to medical and school-based services for youth experiencing homelessness.

Key bills passed by the legislature include:

- AB486 provides new eviction protections that require courts to stay eviction proceedings when the tenant has applied for and is awaiting an approval or denial for rental assistance. This legislation marries the rental assistance process with eviction legal proceedings to ensure that the federal dollars are utilized and exhausted prior to an eviction being granted—and will allow a tenant to defend against an eviction if they can prove a landlord is refusing to accept rental assistance that was available.
- SB254 strengthens the authority of the Nevada Equal Rights Commission (NERC) to investigate and enforce Nevada Fair Housing Law and creates limitations on how conviction history may be considered in the rental application process in some rentals (excludes most properties other than apartment complexes). This bill creates a pathway for Nevada to join 35 other States to create a HUD-Qualified Fair Housing Assistance Program (FHAP) through the NERC and expands NERC’s ability to enforce Nevada’s Fair Housing Laws.
- AB141 allows for summary eviction cases that occur during the pandemic for non-payment of rent to be automatically sealed.
- AB197 eliminates an arbitrary time requirement in Nevada law that required unaccompanied minors experiencing homelessness to live on their own away from their parents or legal guardians for a minimum of four months prior to being able to consent to critical medical services. It also expands the types of healthcare services youth can access to include behavioral healthcare services.
- SB354 requires the Department of Education to develop a statewide framework for restorative justice and requires School Districts to assess the students living situation during each incident of school discipline to deploy restorative justice and connect student to services as an alternative to out-of-school suspension.
- SB12 requires a one-year notification by affordable housing owners before either early termination or expiration of affordability restrictions.

- SB284 removes the sunset of the newly created state tax credit from the 2019 legislative session and provides some provisions to make this tool more effective.

Not all legislation championed by housing and homelessness advocates were successful, including a statewide source of income provision under AB317 and SB254, but advocates are committed to continued work to ensure that state, local and federal policymakers advance affordable housing and homelessness solutions in Nevada.

More information on each of these bills is available in the [2021 legislative summary](#) from the Nevada Homeless Alliance and the Policy Council on Homelessness.

NLIHC is Hiring

NLIHC Seeks Housing Advocacy Organizer

NLIHC seeks a housing advocacy organizer who will be responsible for maintaining and expanding NLIHC membership and mobilizing advocates on federal policy priorities to advance the Coalition’s mission. This is a one-year position that will play a key role in designing and implementing field strategies for various campaign efforts such as the NLIHC HoUSed campaign for long-term solutions to homelessness and housing poverty, the *Our Homes, Our Votes: 2020* non-partisan civic-engagement project, coronavirus emergency rental assistance, federal budget priorities, and other campaigns. The housing advocacy organizer supports outreach activities, develops materials for use by state and local advocates, and supports low-income renters with organizing guidance and tools. The housing advocacy organizer reports to the field director.

Responsibilities/Duties

Field and Campaign Organizing, Education, and Activation

- **Field and Campaign Organizing:** Mobilize state partners, members, endorsers, and supporters on federal affordable housing policy issues. Generate letters and calls to legislative offices; assist organizations and constituents with meetings and media opportunities; generate resolutions, endorsements, and sign-ons; work with broad issue-based campaigns to raise the issue of housing.
- **Field Activity:** Track field activity, including member participation in call-in days and e-mail actions; prepare reports on activities, as requested. Maintain and enhance member and contact database for organizational/field needs; expand its use to distribute congressional profile data and timely, targeted calls to action that advance NLIHC goals.
- **Education and Activation:** Participate in meetings of national housing and other advocates to engage in strategy discussions, including HoUSed campaign policy group, Disaster Housing Recovery Coalition (DHRC), and others as necessary. Create, update, and distribute materials, as needed, including calls-to-action, postcards, fact sheets, endorsement forms, brochures, and stickers. Identify conference and other speaking opportunities for Coalition staff; exhibit and present, as needed.
- **Communications:** Write (on a rotating basis among housing advocacy organizers) a weekly article for NLIHC’s e-newsletter, *Memo to Members and Partners*, highlighting the field work of state partners or other NLIHC members. Help maximize use of the NLIHC website and social media tools, including webinars, videos, and blogs, to engage members. Draft articles for the *Tenant Talk* publication produced for low-income renters. Assist communications staff in generating media ideas and opportunities for work happening in the field.

State Partners

- NLIHC State Partner Meetings: Assist in the planning and convening of biannual NLIHC state partners' meeting. Participate in state partner conference calls.
- State Activities: Track all field activity in the assigned states, including member participation in call-in days, email actions, and prepare reports on activities as requested. Promote activities of state partners through social media and NLIHC communication platforms.
- Growing the State Partner Coalition: Identify and cultivate potential new state partners in places where NLIHC is lacking a strong advocacy lead.

Membership

- Membership Recruitment: Identify sources for prospective members and coordinate ongoing membership drives, including among Housing Week of Action organizers, budget letter signers, HoUsed campaign endorsers, and Disaster Housing Recovery Coalition members. Engage pre-members through video and email; track effectiveness of contact. Undertake activities to achieve annual increases in membership. Reply to all inquiries from current members and potential new members. Use all other interactions as opportunities to secure new memberships.
- Membership Engagement and Retention: Welcome new Coalition members and build relationships with members in assigned states through personal calls, e-mails, and other outreach. Provide prompt and accurate responses to all inquiries about membership concerns. Track status of all members, send renewal notices in timely manner, and follow up as needed. Undertake activities to achieve a 90% or higher member retention rate.
- Resident Outreach: Support resident participation in NLIHC and partner organizations activities. Assist in developing content for *Tenant Talk*, NLIHC's resident newsletter. Convene tenant groups, as determined by NLIHC management.
- Administration: Coordinate or assist in mailings to members and other partners. Maintain hard copy files of member records. Produce membership reports and lists, as needed. Maintain and update databases and contact lists, ensure accuracy of all data. Perform data entry and data cleaning; run reports and queries as needed to support work of NLIHC. Assist in implementation of member survey.

Organizational Support

- Meetings: Attend and participate at meetings with NLIHC Board of Directors; participate in staff meetings, state coalition meetings, trainings, and all Coalition events.
- Interns: Assist with the recruitment and supervision of Field interns.
- Other: Other duties as assigned to maximize organizational effectiveness toward achievement of NLIHC mission.

Qualifications

Applicants must possess a bachelor's degree and have at least two years of work experience in U.S. elections and/or direct assistance to low-income communities (additional years of experience preferred; exceptional candidates with fewer may be considered). Applicants should have a strong commitment to social justice. Candidates should have strong analytical, writing, and organizational skills, as well as a keen attention to detail. Applicants should also be proficient in the Microsoft Office suite. Familiarity with Salesforce CRM database preferred.

An equal opportunity, affirmative action employer, NLIHC offers a competitive salary and a generous benefits package. This is a temporary full-time position located in Washington, DC, but NLIHC will be flexible about location (depending on the pandemic).

Interested candidates should submit a resume, cover letter with salary requirement, one writing sample, and three references (at least two of whom are current or former supervisors) to Renee Willis, vice president for field and communications and Bairy Diakite, operations manager at: rwillis@nlihc.org and bdiakite@nlihc.org

NLIHC News

NLIHC Welcomes Sidney Betancourt as Housing Advocacy Organizer

NLIHC is pleased to welcome Sidney Betancourt as a housing advocacy organizer. Sidney will work with the NLIHC field team to expand NLIHC membership and engage advocates on federal policy priorities to advance the Coalition's mission.

Prior to joining NLIHC, Sidney was the 2020-2021 Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute (CHCI) housing graduate fellow. During her time as a fellow, Sidney worked with the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) on legislative research aimed at preparing the agency for a governance restructure. She spent the last half of her fellowship with the House Committee on Financial Services, Subcommittee for Housing, Community Development and Insurance. As a committee fellow, Sidney supported staff in drafting important legislation related to public housing, infrastructure, and homelessness.



Sidney is a graduate of the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, where she earned a bachelor's degree and Master of Social Work. During her field placement as a social work student, she worked at a homeless outreach agency in downtown Las Vegas collaborating with a legal aid agency to quash unjust warrants for individuals experiencing homelessness.

Please join us in welcoming Sidney to the NLIHC team!

NLIHC in the News

NLIHC in the News for the Week of June 6

The following are some of the news stories that NLIHC contributed to during the week of June 6:

- "States Are Making Tenants Jump Through Hoops to Get Federal Rental Assistance," *The Intercept*, June 10 at: <https://bit.ly/3cE9XiO>
- "The Federal Eviction Ban Ends June 30, and Millions Could Owe Back Rent. These Assistance Programs Can Help," *NextAdvisor.com*, June 9 at: <https://bit.ly/2SoiMGB>
- "Logjams Are Keeping Much of \$47 Billion in Federal Aid From Renters" *The Wall Street Journal*, June 7 at: <https://on.wsj.com/3zcy2GX>

NLIHC Staff

Kyle Arbuckle, Housing Advocacy Organizer, x227
Olivia Arena, Housing Advocacy Organizer, x209
Xavier Arriaga, Policy Analyst, x231
Andrew Aurand, Vice President for Research, x245

Victoria Bourret, Senior Organizer for Housing Advocacy, x244
Jen Butler, Director, Media Relations and Communications, x239
Alayna Calabro, Policy Analyst–COVID-19 Response, x252
Josephine Clarke, Senior Executive Assistant, x226
Bairy Diakite, Operations Manager, x254
Emma Foley, Research Analyst, x249
Dan Emmanuel, Senior Research Analyst, x316
Ed Gramlich, Senior Advisor, x314
Sarah Gallagher, Senior Project Director, ERASE
Patrick Hanrahan, Graphic Design/Communications Intern
Stephanie Jean, Development Coordinator
Kim Johnson, Housing Policy Analyst, x243
Paul Kealey, Chief Operating Officer, x232
Mike Koprowski, Director, Multisector Housing Campaign, x317
Joseph Lindstrom, Director, Field Organizing, x222
Mayerline Louis-Juste, Communications Specialist, x201
Imani Mayo, Policy Intern
Fonzi Mendoza, Research Intern
Khara Norris, Senior Director of Administration, x242
Neetu Nair, Research Analyst, x291
Noah Patton, Housing Policy Analyst, x227
Ikra Rafi, Creative Services Specialist, x246
Catherine Reeves, Development Coordinator, x234
Sarah Saadian, Vice President, Public Policy, x228
Brooke Schipporeit, Housing Advocacy Organizer, x233
Seulgi Smith, Graphic Design/Communications Intern
Dan Threet, Research Analyst, x202
Chantelle Wilkinson, Housing Campaign Manager, x230
Renee Willis, Vice President for Field and Communications, x247
Rebecca Yae, Senior Research Analyst–COVID-19 Response
Diane Yentel, President and CEO, x225