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Budget and Appropriations

Take Action to Stop Harmful Amendments to the FY24 Spending Bill and Protect Housing Investments!

The U.S. House of Representatives and Senate are taking steps to advance their draft Transportation, Housing and Urban Development spending bills for fiscal year (FY) 2024. The Senate may vote on a minibus – a package of three spending bills, including one for affordable housing programs – during the week of October 16, when Senators return from recess. The House may vote on its draft spending bill as soon as a new speaker is elected to replace Kevin McCarthy (R-CA), who was ousted from his leadership recently.

While the House cannot vote on legislation or amendments on the House floor without a speaker in place, committee work can continue. The House Committee on Rules has not yet set a date for determining which amendments will be approved to receive a vote on the House floor. Once the House elects a new speaker, lawmakers can hold a vote on the THUD spending bill and several amendments.

It is critical that advocates use this time to weigh in with Congress. Several harmful amendments have been proposed, including amendments to further cut federal investments in affordable housing and harm America’s lowest-income and most marginalized households.

Advocates should contact their representatives as soon as possible and urge them to OPPOSE any amendments to:

- Cut federal investments in affordable housing and homelessness, including, but not limited to:
  - Eliminating funding for the Housing for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) program from Rep. Davidson (R-OH).
  - Cutting in half funding for Community Development Block Grants from Rep. Grothman (R-WI).
  - Reducing HUD funding by $4.95 billion from Rep. Rosendale (R-MT), or to FY19 levels from Rep. Buck (R-CO).
  - Cutting funding for fair housing activities and rental assistance from Rep. Brecheen (R-OK).
- Undermine HUD’s ability to use evidence-based approaches to address homelessness from Rep. Barr (R-KY).
- Force mixed-status immigrant households to separate or face eviction from HUD housing from Rep. Burlison (R-MO).
- Prevent HUD from advancing racial equity or diversity, including amendments offered by Rep. Self (R-TX), Rep. Norman (R-SC), and two amendments from Rep. Grothman (R-WI).
- Weaken HUD’s Equal Access rule and allow shelters to discriminate against transgender individuals experiencing homelessness from Rep. Norman (R-SC).
- Undermine fair housing laws and enforcement, including
  - Prohibiting HUD from implementing or enforcing its Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing rule from Rep. Ogles (R-TN).
- Cutting funding to the HUD Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity from Rep. Brecheen (R-OK).
- Restrict access to federal housing benefits, including:
  - Preventing HUD from providing financial assistance to certain able-bodied individuals from Rep. Mast (R-FL).
  - Imposing rigid work requirements and drug testing from Rep. Strong (AL).

**Take Action**

Tell Congress that it cannot balance the federal budget at the expense of people with the lowest incomes! Advocates can take action TODAY in the following ways:

- **Contact your senators and representatives** to urge them to expand – not cut – investments in affordable, accessible homes through the FY24 spending bill and to oppose any harmful amendments that would make it more difficult for people with the greatest needs to access accessible, affordable homes.

- Join over 2,100 organizations by signing on to a [national letter](#) from the Campaign for Housing and Community Development Funding (CHCDF) calling on Congress to oppose budget cuts and instead to support the highest level of funding possible for affordable housing, homelessness, and community development resources in FY24.

**Background**

After enacting a 45-day continuing resolution just hours before a government shutdown would have taken place, Congress now has until November 17 to approve final spending bills or face another risk a government shutdown. Both the House and Senate are working to advance their draft spending bills before congressional leaders return to negotiations.

While advocates across the country have done tremendous work to ensure that neither the House nor Senate FY24 spending bills drastically cut funding for vital HUD programs, including rental assistance and Homeless Assistance Grants, the road to enacting a final FY24 spending bill with sufficient HUD funding is steep.

The House version proposes funding HUD at $68.2 billion, a $6.4 billion (or roughly 10%) increase to HUD programs over previously enacted levels. HUD needs an approximately $13 billion increase in funding over current levels, however, just to maintain existing assistance. For more details about the House proposal, see NLIHC’s full [analysis](#) and updated [budget chart](#). Learn about the Senate proposal [here](#).

The Senate may vote on the THUD bill the week of October 16. The House could vote on the THUD spending bill and possibly several amendments as soon as a new speaker is chosen. These amendments could further cut federal investments in affordable housing and homelessness or make it more difficult for people with the lowest incomes to access accessible, affordable housing.
Congress needs to hear from advocates! Urge them to expand federal investments in affordable housing and homelessness, and to protect low-income renters and people experiencing homelessness.

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**HoUSed Campaign for Universal, Stable, Affordable Homes**

**Recap of 10/10 National HoUSed Campaign Call**

In the most recent (October 10) call for the national HoUSed campaign, we heard from Eric Tars of the National Homelessness Law Center (NHLC) about NHLC’s Human Right to Housing Report Card. Rebecca Yae of the Housing Initiative at Penn and NLIHC’s Sophie-Siebach-Glover discussed a new report on tenant and landlord experiences with emergency rental assistance. Courtney Cooperman gave updates on NLIHC’s Our Homes, Our Votes campaign. We also received news from the field, and more.

In his remarks, Eric Tars explained that the concept of “housing as a human right” is not just a rallying slogan but a rich source of legal norms. “Right to Housing” language is a practical tool that can be used by advocates to hold their governments accountable, according to Eric. The National Homelessness Law Center’s Human Right to Housing Report Card is a contribution to the human right to housing movement. Grading the country in seven categories, the report card concludes that the U.S. earns an “F” when it comes to ensuring affordable housing. The report card also shows that as of 2023, there is not a single state or county in the U.S. where a full-time worker making minimum wage can afford to rent a modest two-bedroom apartment. The report card recommends that U.S. federal government agencies permanently implement COVID-19 policies, like emergency rental assistance, expand monthly child tax credits and renters’ credits, and ensure universal housing affordability outside of the annual appropriations process.

Next, Rebecca Yae from the Housing Initiative at Penn and NLIHC’s Sophie Siebach-Glover discussed a new report, Beyond Housing Stability: Understanding Tenant and Landlord Experiences and the Impact of Emergency Rental Assistance. The research leading up to the report had three primary goals: to understand the characteristics of renter households that applied for emergency rental assistance (ERA); to explore the experiences of program administrators, tenants, and landlords; and to measure the short-term impacts of ERA on housing stability, financial security, and physical and mental health. Ten sites participated in the study, including local programs, state programs, and one tribal program, and the research used quantitative as well as qualitative approaches. Tenant surveys were administered to all 10 sites, generating just under 11,000 responses. The research found that tenants who applied for ERA were more housing secure and less financially precarious. It also found that tenants with ERA had better access to healthcare compared to their counterparts without assistance.

Courtney Cooperman provided updates on NLIHC’s Our Homes, Our Votes campaign. Courtney explained that boosting voter turnout among low-income renters is critical to achieving housing justice. Renters persistently turn out to vote at lower rates than homeowners, and Courtney offered numerous ways for advocates to help reverse this pattern. Courtney encouraged advocates to reach out to her directly at ccoopeman@nlihc.org to get involved.
Sabine Brown with Oklahoma Policy Institute and Brian Wilson of the Alaska Coalition on Housing and Homelessness joined the call to share field updates. Sabine Brown stated that Oklahoma leads the nation in evictions (see Memo 6/12). One of the most significant pieces of legislation passed recently in Oklahoma was a $215 million investment in the Oklahoma Stability Program. Funding for the housing program will be used to make interest free loans for developers to build single-family homes for purchase and provide down payment assistance and gap financing for single and multifamily rental units. The funding is intended to provide “workforce” housing for those making 80% or AMI or less. The program is not intended to target Oklahoma’s extremely low-income families. Advocates are hoping to build off the program to prioritize extremely low-income families who are experiencing the housing shortage most acutely.

Brian Wilson of the Alaska Coalition on Housing and Homelessness discussed a recent visit from HUD Secretary Marcia L. Fudge, explaining that advocates in Alaska and Alaska’s federal delegation had been pushing for the meeting since spring. During the visit, highlighted in NLIHC’s 8/28 Memo, Secretary Fudge witnessed firsthand the unique housing issues faced by Alaskans and discussed solutions to advocates’ concerns.

Finally, NLIHC’s Sarah Saadian discussed recent events in Congress, including former Speaker McCarthy’s removal from the Speakership and harmful amendments in the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development appropriations bill (THUD). Sarah urged advocates to contact their senators and representatives to urge them to expand – not cut – investments in affordable, accessible homes through the FY24 spending bill. Sarah summarized amendments that could be added to the THUD appropriations bill and would cut federal investments in affordable housing and harm America’s lowest-income and most marginalized households. Sarah concluded by urging advocates to contact their House Representatives to oppose any harmful amendments that would further cut HUD funding, undermine fair housing and racial equity, or prevent marginalized people from accessing the resources they need. Finally, Sarah urged organizations to join over 2,100 organizations by signing on to a national letter from the Campaign for Housing and Community Development Funding (CHCDF) calling on Congress to oppose budget cuts and instead to support the highest level of funding possible for affordable housing, homelessness, and community development resources in FY24.

National calls take place every other week. Our next call will be held on October 23 at 2:30 pm ET. Register for the call at: https://tinyurl.com/ru73qan

Disaster Housing Recovery

New Report on 2022 Kentucky Floods Highlights Impact of Disasters on Affordable Housing

A report by the Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland on flooding in Kentucky in July 2022 finds that floods exacerbated affordable housing shortages and pre-existing weaknesses in local labor markets. The report, Resilience and Recovery: Insights from the July 2022 Eastern Kentucky
Flood, reveals the devastating effects of the floods, which led to permanent displacement and population out-migration, which in turn reduced the available workforce.

A series of intense thunderstorms resulted in heavy rainfall, deadly flash floods, and severe river flooding in eastern Kentucky and central Appalachia during the last week of July 2022. Hourly rainfall rates exceeding four inches over the course of several days and subsequent flooding led to 39 fatalities and federal disaster area declarations for 13 eastern Kentucky counties.

Across the 13 counties, the floods affected 8,950 homes, disproportionately those of low-income residents. Low-income households and renters are at a higher risk of permanent displacement due to occupancy of lower-quality housing that is more likely to be demolished instead of being rebuilt following a disaster. The likelihood of displacement is exacerbated by limited relocation options in rural areas and the prohibitive cost of flood insurance.

The report finds that in Breathitt, Kott, Letcher, and Perry counties, residential vacancies increased by 19% in the months following the floods. Given that an average of 600 people a year have left the area since 1984, the data indicate that significant increases in displacement and out-migration are occurring.

Read the full report at: https://bit.ly/3Qf2ivr

Our Homes, Our Votes

Register for Upcoming Our Homes, Our Votes Webinar: Organizing to Win Affordable Homes at the Ballot Box

Join NLIHC’s nonpartisan Our Homes, Our Votes campaign for the second installment of a two-part webinar series on ballot measures as a pathway toward housing justice. The second webinar, “Housing Is Built with Ballots: Organizing to Win Affordable Homes at the Ballot Box,” will take place on Thursday, October 26, at 2:30 pm ET. Click here to register for the webinar.

Behind the scenes of every winning ballot measure is an organized campaign to craft a policy proposal, build a coalition, mobilize supporters, and get out the vote. The webinar will discuss best practices in ballot measure advocacy and preview some of the campaigns that are already underway for the 2024 election cycle. In celebration of Vote Early Day, which takes place on October 26, NLIHC will also share nonpartisan resources for getting out the vote in this year’s state and local elections.

The webinar will feature:

- Angelina Cornejo, campaign strategy coordinator, East Bay Housing Organizations
- Emily Martiniuk, resident leader, Residents United Network-Los Angeles
- Madeleine Hammerlund, housing campaign organizer, Our Future Starts at Home (Minnesota)
The webinar will complement the first installment of the mini-series, “Housing Is Built with Ballots: A Year of Ballot Measure Victories in Review.” The recording of the first webinar can be found here, and the presentation slides can be found here.

For more information about Our Homes, Our Votes, visit: https://www.ourhomes-ourvotes.org/

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**Opportunity Starts at Home**

**Report Connects Climate Change, Racial Inequities, and Public Housing**

A recent report by the Urban Institute’s Housing Matters initiative explores the impacts of disinvestment from public housing on racial inequities and climate risk. The report shares demographic data about residents in public housing, climate risks to units and families, and local solutions to climate risks in New York, Seattle, and Boston. “Climate change will affect all communities, but it’ll be worse for communities with fewer social and economic resources to weather the storms,” explain the authors. “Residents of public housing are socially vulnerable, meaning they’re more likely to experience the negative impacts of climate-related hazards because they don’t have access to these resources.” Read the report here.

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**Research**

**Large Landlords More Likely to Engage in Serial Eviction Filing**

A new study published in Socius, “Every Month Like Clockwork? Patterns and Prevalence of Serial Eviction Filing among Landlords,” finds that landlords with larger portfolios are more likely than those with smaller portfolios to engage in serial eviction filing and to do so over longer periods of time. The study also finds that serial filings pursued by larger landlords or over longer periods of time are less likely to result in court-ordered removals of households. The findings suggest that many larger landlords use serial eviction filing more as a means to collect rent than to remove renters.

Using eviction filing data and property records from Washington, D.C. for the years 2014-2019, the authors analyzed the relationship between landlord size and the occurrence of repeat eviction filings against the same household. The authors found that 64% of all eviction filings were part of a series of at least two filings against the same household within a six-month period. These filings accounted for 34% of all eviction filings for landlords with 1,000 or more units and 33% for landlords with 101-1,000 units, compared to just 16% for landlords with five or fewer units.

The authors also considered the relationship between landlord size and the duration of serial eviction filings. Larger landlords were more likely to file for eviction repeatedly over longer periods of time. The largest landlords, for example, were more likely to engage in a long sequence of filings against the same household (seven to 16 filings over a one-to-two-year
period) or a very long sequence (17 or more filings over multiple years) compared to the smallest landlords.

Finally, the authors examined the relationship between serial eviction filings and the court-ordered removal of households, finding that, while few serial filings ended in the formal removal of the household, longer durations of repeat filings were less likely to end in formal removal than shorter durations of repeat filings. Serial filings from larger landlords were also less likely to result in court-ordered removals. While a series of eviction filings from the smallest landlords ended in the court-ordered removal of a household 15% of the time, a series of filings from the largest landlords resulted in removal just 8% of the time.

The authors conclude that their findings support the theory that landlords, particularly larger landlords, use serial eviction filing as a rent collection strategy. However, serial eviction filing can hurt renters’ credit and housing histories. The authors call for policies that support rent collection in ways that do not further harm renters’ credit and housing histories, such as eviction diversion programs that can provide more informal resolutions for rent disputes. They also recommend higher eviction filing fees to discourage serial filing and highlight the need for policy solutions that specifically target larger, corporate landlords that engage in serial filings.

Read the article at: https://bit.ly/3t1t07G

From the Field

Investigation Finds More Than 2,000 State-Funded Apartments Vacant in Massachusetts Despite Lengthy Waitlists

An investigation by Massachusetts public radio station WBUR and ProPublica finds that nearly 2,300 public housing units in Massachusetts are vacant despite a waitlist of 184,000 people. Published in September, the investigation describes the state’s unique public housing system and highlights the limitations of its practices and procedures, which have contributed to the public housing crisis. In addition to discussing the concerns of stakeholders, the investigation proposes possible solutions to reduce the number of vacancies and ensure stable, affordable housing for more households. Since the investigation was released, Massachusetts housing officials have launched a plan to substantially reduce vacancies by the end of the year. Housing advocates have been encouraged to see the state take swift action.

Massachusetts is one of only four states with state-subsidized public housing and manages 41,500 total homes, more than twice as many as the three other states combined. The Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (EOHLC) oversees the program, and local housing authorities (LHAs) own and manage the apartments. The public housing is reserved for those who are cost-burdened and severely cost-burdened, with a particular focus on seniors, people with disabilities, and families. Residents typically pay less than a third of their monthly income in rent, and those with no income must pay a minimum of $5. Renters who earn less than 80% of the area median income (AMI) are eligible to apply. The investigation links to NLIHC’s Gap report, showing that Massachusetts is the third most expensive state for rental housing, and notes
that the state spends more than $200 million per year on operating expenses for low-income housing.

Key findings from the investigation include the following:

- There are 2,291 vacant state public housing units in Massachusetts.
- LHAs blame the large number of vacancies on a statewide waitlist enacted in 2019.
- Many LHAs require additional funding for staff and major repairs and renovations.
- At least 121 public housing units have been converted into non-residential spaces.
- Some units have been empty for years, while major renovations and redevelopment plans have been stalled.

Local housing officials cite the statewide online system, Common Housing Application for Massachusetts Programs (CHAMP), as a major reason for there being so many vacancies. CHAMP, which was enacted in 2014 and launched in 2019, creates a single pool of applicants for the states’ 230 LHAs. Concerns were raised about the length and complexity of the application, complications with duplicate applications, and the reliance of the application process on the U.S. Postal Service, even while many applicants are experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity. The state has acknowledged that LHAs need to hire extra staff to screen the large influx of applications.

Funding is another cause of the high number of vacancies. LHAs report needing money for repairs, as well as for staff to conduct the repairs and handle administrative load. The state estimates that LHAs require $3.2 billion for necessary repairs but are faced with an actual budget of $184 million. The public housing program has been underfunded for decades, with an independent auditor suggesting the program was facing a state of emergency in 2006.

The investigation also describes actions by LHAs that have hampered efforts to reduce the waitlist and vacancies. For instance, some LHAs have converted apartments that are meant to be used as living units into storage, offices, and even a police department. There are also vacant units awaiting repairs or teardowns, which advocates claim could be used to temporarily house people. LHAs continue to receive a subsidy from the state for converted units and empty units awaiting renovations at a time when vacancies are widespread and the public housing waitlist grows.

Three days after the publication of the investigation, the EOHCL released a memo initiating a 90-day push to reduce the number of vacancies by providing additional financial and technical assistance to LHAs. State housing officials will also work closely with LHAs that have vacancies in excess of 10% of their total units. Advocates are pleased to see the state taking swift action, particularly at a time when the need for stable, affordable housing is skyrocketing around the state.

Read the full investigation here.

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Tenant Talk Live on Hiatus in October; Participate in Feedback Survey!
“Tenant Talk Live” – a webinar series geared toward tenants and resident leaders – will be on hiatus during the month of October. In the meantime, we invite past attendees to participate in a survey to help us plan meetings for 2024. The next Tenant Talk Live meeting will be held on Monday, November 6, at 6 pm ET.

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**Fact of the Week**

**Black Adults with Children Experience Highest Eviction Filing Rates**

![Eviction Filing Rates Among Adult Renters by Race or Ethnicity and Presence of Children (2007-2016)](image)


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**NLIHC in the News**

**NLIHC in the News for the Week of October 8**

The following are some of the news stories to which NLIHC contributed during the week of October 8:

- “As Chelsea Demo Plans Move Ahead, A Look Back to NYCHA’s Brooklyn Razing” City Limits, October 12 at: https://tinyurl.com/2myn2wyw
**NLIHC Careers**

**NLIHC Seeks Housing Campaign Coordinator**

NLIHC seeks a housing campaign coordinator to join our Opportunity Starts at Home (OSAH) campaign. The housing campaign coordinator will work closely with the OSAH campaign director to build and maintain a cooperative, productive coalition structure, including by coordinating closely with the OSAH campaign’s core partners, the campaign Steering Committee, and a larger network of cooperating organizations.

**Background:**

Opportunity Starts at Home is a dynamic, long-term, multi-sector campaign that has built a movement of multi-sector partners to ensure that the nation’s historically marginalized households and those with the lowest incomes live in safe, accessible, affordable homes in neighborhoods that are free from discrimination and where everyone has equitable opportunities to thrive. NLIHC, the National Alliance to End Homelessness, the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, and Children’s HealthWatch launched the Opportunity Starts at Home campaign in 2018 to solve the nation’s housing crisis. The goals of the campaign are to advance federal policy solutions that:

- Expand rental assistance for every income-eligible household.
- Expand the stock of housing affordable to households with the lowest incomes.
- Stabilize households by providing emergency assistance to avert housing instability and homelessness.

The campaign is advised by a Steering Committee of leading multi-sector organizations and mobilizes a broader coalition of multi-sector partners through the campaign’s Roundtable. The campaign also supports state partners that parallel the work of the national campaign by building state-level multisector coalitions and leveraging those partnerships to advance federal housing policies.

**Job Description:**

The OSAH housing campaign coordinator will:

- Support the Campaign Director in building and maintaining a cooperative, productive coalition structure, including close coordination with the Campaign’s core partners, the Campaign Steering Committee, and a larger network of cooperating organizations on the campaign’s big table of partner organizations, the campaign’s Roundtable.
• Support the Campaign director in carrying out all aspects of the Campaign plan, including helping to develop and implement effective communications, outreach and advocacy plans.
• Support the Campaign director in advancing the campaign’s policy agenda in Congress by working closely with coalition partners and NLIHC’s broader policy team.
• Working closely with the NLIHC field team, provide and administer grants to state partners and ensure effective partner grants management: ensure grantees are carrying out the terms of their grants and are effectively and appropriately using the grants provided to achieve intended outcomes.
• Ensure that state-based coalitions in grant-receiving states have the materials, tools, and other supports needed to function as effectively as possible.
• Organize webinars and other training and technical assistance for key coalition members engaged in the campaign in all states.
• In partnership with NLIHC’s field team, stay in close contact with key organizational leaders in grant-receiving and other states to ensure that the Campaign and state efforts are best synchronized.
• Review plans and reports about state coalition efforts in grant-receiving states to determine ongoing effectiveness.
• Develop and implement a plan to ensure that state and local leaders are effectively engaged with and apprised of Campaign-related developments.
• Contribute to ongoing fundraising efforts to ensure sustainable funding for the campaign through existing and new funding opportunities.
• Contribute to periodic reports to the Campaign’s partners, Steering Committee members, donors, and relevant others about the Campaign’s progress; and other duties as assigned.

Qualifications:

• A bachelor’s degree (master’s degree preferred). Relevant life experience may be substituted for years of education.
• A minimum of two to three years previous experience working in, coordinating, or leading multi-faceted projects, national initiatives, or campaigns. Exceptional candidates with fewer years of such experience may be considered.
• A demonstrated, clear commitment to the alleviation of poverty (affordable housing experience a plus).
• Experience successfully building partnerships among organizations.
• Demonstrated excellence in organizational skills.
• Excellent communications skills, both orally and in writing.
• An ability to work in a diverse, fast-paced environment.
• Experience in grant management and in reporting to donors a plus.

Compensation and Benefits:

An equal opportunity, affirmative action employer, NLIHC offers a competitive salary and benefits package. This is a full-time position located in Washington, D.C.

Job Application Process:
Candidates for this position should send a cover letter, resume, and two writing samples to: Lakesha Dawson, Director of Operations, NLIHC, 1000 Vermont Avenue, N.W., Suite 500, Washington, D.C. 20005 at ldawson@nlihc.org. The cover letter should describe the candidate’s interest in, and relevant experiences for, the position, and should include salary requirements and the names and contact information for at least three people serving as candidate references. (NLIHC will not contact references before consulting with the candidate.)

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NLIHC News

Where to Find Us – October 16

- Housing Is a Human Right Orange County General Meeting: Housing First – Virtual, October 16 (Courtney Cooperman)
- Habitat for Humanity of the Greater La Crosse Region Advocacy Committee Meeting – Virtual, October 20 (Courtney Cooperman)
- Under One Roof Annual Conference - New Brunswick, NJ, October 20 (Nada Hussein)
- Housing Is a Human Right Orange County General Meeting: Housing First – Virtual, October 30 (Courtney Cooperman)
- Southern California Association of Non-Profit Housing – Los Angeles, CA, November 1 (Sarah Saadian)
- Congressional Progressive Caucus Hill Briefing on Homelessness – Virtual, November 2 (Diane Yentel)
- Sinergia NY Housing Advocacy Program – Virtual, November 8 (Lindsay Duvall)
- Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency Conference – Hershey, PA, December 7 (Sarah Saadian)

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Chantelle Wilkinson, OSAH Campaign Director, x230
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Diane Yentel, President and CEO, x225