

**Volume 28, Issue 33**  
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## Budget and Appropriations

### Senate Prepares for Vote on HUD Funding Bill; Members of Congress Return to Capitol Hill with Just Weeks to Avoid Government Shutdown – Take Action!

Both the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate are in session this week, with lawmakers having returned from their home districts and states to Capitol Hill. Members of Congress now have until September 30 to reach an agreement on funding the federal government or risk a partial government shutdown beginning on October 1.

Throughout the August recess, leaders in the House and Senate continued conversations on the federal budget, with both Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) and House Speaker Kevin McCarthy (R-CA) agreeing that a short-term spending measure – known as a continuing resolution (CR) – would be necessary to keep the federal government funded in the short term. CRs maintain the previously appropriated year’s level of funding for federal programs for a specified period of time, which would give lawmakers more time to reach an agreement on a fiscal year (FY) 2024 funding package. Because the costs of housing and development rise every year, [it is crucial](#) that HUD’s affordable housing and homelessness assistance programs receive increased annual appropriations just to maintain the current number of people and communities served.

While both Democrats and Republicans have voiced their commitment to avoiding a shutdown, the path to enacting a CR remains unclear. The White House, along with most of the Senate and many members of the House, support attaching a supplemental funding measure to the CR that would provide additional funding for purposes like disaster relief, as well as continued aid to Ukraine. Members of the far-right House Freedom Caucus, however, have roundly rejected calls for supplemental spending and are instead insisting on attaching provisions to the CR that would impose even deeper spending cuts on vital federal programs.

With the House back in session, Speaker McCarthy must decide whether he will bring to the House floor a CR and supplemental spending bill that would garner the bipartisan support it needs to be enacted into law, or whether he will instead bend to the will of the most extreme members of his party and propose a disastrous CR that could pass the House along a party-line vote and die in the Democrat-controlled Senate. The latter option will certainly slow down the process of enacting a CR and increase the likelihood of a government shutdown.

Meanwhile, Appropriations leaders in the Senate are preparing to bring a package of three FY24 spending bills – known as a “minibus” – to the floor as soon as today (9/11), including the Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development (THUD) appropriations bill. The [Senate THUD bill](#) would provide an \$8.26 billion (roughly 13%) increase to HUD’s budget over FY23-enacted levels, despite Appropriations leaders drafting their bills according to the austere topline funding caps provided under the debt ceiling agreement, known as the “Fiscal Responsibility Act.”

While the THUD bill was approved by the Senate Committee on Appropriations with bipartisan support (see *Memo*, [7/24](#)), a full vote in the Senate will likely present the opportunity to add potentially harmful amendments to the bills under consideration. NLIHC will be sure to monitor

the vote and respond to any potentially harmful amendments. Senate Appropriations Chair Patty Murray (D-WA) and Vice Chair Susan Collins (R-ME) are reportedly aiming to pass all 12 appropriations bills for FY24 in the Senate before the September 30 deadline, putting the chamber in a strong position for negotiations with the House.

### **Take Action!**

Together, we can – and have – [achieved historic protections and resources](#) for renters with the lowest incomes, and together we can continue to fight the ongoing threat of cuts to HUD’s vital affordable housing and homelessness resources. Advocates can use NLIHC’s [Legislative Action Center](#) to call or email their members of Congress and urge them to expand – not cut – funding for HUD’s vital affordable housing and homelessness programs in the FY24 budget.

Thanks to the hard work of advocates across the country, who mobilized to weigh in with their elected officials, HUD’s vital rental assistance, homelessness assistance, and tribal housing program were spared from cuts in both the House and Senate draft bills. We still have work to do to ensure these funding levels remain in a final bill, and that other critical programs, such as Public Housing, are also fully funded.

Keep making your voice heard, and 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, including by:
  - **Providing the Senate’s proposed funding for Tenant-Based Rental Assistance (TBRA) and Project-Based Rental Assistance programs.** While both the House and Senate provided increased funding for these vital programs, it is unlikely that the House’s proposed funding levels would be sufficient to renew all existing contracts. The Senate bill provides funding not only sufficient to renew existing voucher contracts but to expand vouchers to an additional 4,000 households.
  - **Ensuring full funding for public housing operations and repairs.** Both the House and Senate bill propose funding cuts to the Public Housing Capital Fund, despite an over \$70 billion capital needs backlog in the public housing portfolio. While the Senate bill provides increased funding for Public Housing Operations – which the House bill cut – it is crucial that these programs receive increased funding in FY24 just to maintain the current level of services.
  - **Allocating the Senate’s proposed funding for Homeless Assistance Grants.** HUD’s Homeless Assistance Grants (HAG) program provides vital funding to respond to the needs of people experiencing homelessness.
  - **Protecting funding for legal assistance to prevent evictions in the Senate bill.** The Senate bill maintains \$20 million in funding for a new grant program for legal assistance to prevent evictions, which the House proposal eliminates.
  - **Appropriating the House’s proposed funding for Native housing.** While both the House and Senate bills would provide increased funding for native housing programs, the House spending bill would provide a more than 40% increase from

FY23 to the Native American Housing Block Grant program – a significant investment towards addressing the housing crisis on tribal lands.

- Join over 2,000 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.

### **Want to Support NLIHC’s Work? Become a Member!**

One way to support NLIHC and this work is by becoming an NLIHC member. NLIHC membership is open to individuals, organizations, corporations, and government agencies, and annual membership dues are suggested amounts, meaning you can join at any amount that works for you.

You can join easily online at [nlihc.org/membership](https://nlihc.org/membership) – or contact [outreach@nlihc.org](mailto:outreach@nlihc.org) with any questions.

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## **Homelessness and Housing First**

### **Register for Today’s (9/11) NLIHC, Alliance, and CBPP Webinar on Homelessness and Housing First**

NLIHC, the National Alliance to End Homelessness (the Alliance), and the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP) invite advocates nationwide to [register](#) for the final webinar in our nine-part series on homelessness and Housing First. The webinar, “Getting the Message Right: Reevaluating How We Talk about Housing First,” will be held today, September 11, from 2:30 to 4 pm ET. In recent years, widespread misinformation about the Housing First model – what it is, how it works, and what it entails – has sown confusion and misunderstanding about the model among lawmakers, the media, and members of the public. The panelists on today’s webinar will discuss the challenges of messaging about the success of Housing First and offer their perspectives on how to reorient messaging to illustrate the program’s benefits more effectively.

The webinar will feature Jen Butler, vice president of external affairs at NLIHC; Tom Murphy, senior director of communications at the Alliance; Marisol Bello, executive director of Housing Narrative Lab; Lindsay Knotts, managing director of impact strategies at TheCaseMade; and Mark Horvath, founder of Invisible People.

*Please note that this webinar is not a training, and webinar attendees will not receive a certificate of completion.*

Did you miss the previous webinars on homelessness and Housing First? Check out the [webinar recaps](#), including links to the recordings and presentation slides.

Register for the webinar at: <https://bit.ly/3vIbn5o>

Read more about Housing First at: <https://bit.ly/3vHf8YR>

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## **Join Framework for an Equitable Homelessness Response’s “Healthy Parents Healthy Babies” Webinar on 9/21**

[Join](#) the Framework for an Equitable Homelessness Response’s “[Healthy Parents Healthy Babies](#)” webinar on September 21 from 12 to 1:30 pm ET. The webinar will focus on [Healthy Parents Healthy Babies](#), a recent report from the Framework team that documents and disseminates strategies to reduce racial disparities, increase housing stability, and improve maternal health, birth outcomes, and child health.

The webinar will feature findings from the new report, including recommendations for improving housing and health outcomes for pregnant people facing extreme housing instability or homelessness and their families. The report and its recommendations are informed by the experiences of pregnant women navigating housing and healthcare systems across the country.

Register for the “Healthy Parents Healthy Babies” webinar [here](#).

Read the report [here](#).

View other resources from the Framework for an Equitable Homelessness Response at [housingequityframework.org](https://housingequityframework.org)

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## **Disaster Housing Recovery**

### **HUD Announces Funding to Support People Experiencing Homelessness in Maui through Rapid Unsheltered Survivor Housing Program**

HUD awarded [\\$1.3 million](#) to the State of Hawaii on August 23 to support people experiencing homelessness and people at risk of homelessness through the Department’s Rapid Unsheltered Survivor Housing (RUSH) program. The funding was provided to help communities in Maui in the wake of recent catastrophic wildfires and was facilitated by FEMA’s activation of Transitional Sheltering Assistance.

Hawaii has long had a [shortage of housing](#), but the disaster-induced surge in shelter needs has exceeded local capacity in the town of Lahaina and in Maui. FEMA, the Red Cross, and local community members are already assisting survivors, but RUSH funding will fill gaps in federal disaster assistance. The grant is available to help communities provide outreach, emergency shelter, rapid re-housing, and other assistance to people experiencing or at risk of homelessness who are in disaster-affected areas.

“Before the wildfires, Hawai’i already had a housing crisis – one that disproportionately impacts Native Hawaiians,” said HUD Secretary Marcia L. Fudge. “HUD is closely monitoring the impact of this disaster on local housing needs, and this funding will fill the gap to ensure the

State of Hawai'i has what it needs to support people experiencing homelessness. HUD is invested in supporting Maui's recovery and will continue to work with local officials to support the path forward."

Read a press release on the award at: <https://bit.ly/3sJB1XJ>

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## **USDA Single-Family Direct Loan Program Will Expand to Cover Presidentially Declared Disaster Areas**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced in late July that the agency would open its Single-Family Housing Section 504 Home Repair Loans and Grants Program to all presidentially declared disaster areas as part of a pilot program aiming to increase the amount of assistance available to disaster survivors. The [Section 504 program](#) has long been part of USDA's Rural Development work, providing loans and grants to low-income homeowners in rural areas for the purposes of home repair. The disaster recovery pilot program was initially available in just 23 states, along with American Samoa and Puerto Rico. The USDA published a [correction](#) on September 6 expanding the program to declared disaster areas. With the expansion, homeowners in rural locations that have received a disaster declaration from the administration and who live in single-family homes damaged in a disaster will be eligible to receive loans and grants for home repairs under the program.

The program has also waived requirements applying to owners of manufactured housing. Previously, owners of manufactured homes were required to pay for costs associated with moving replacement manufactured housing to the original site of their home, and individuals were required to own and occupy the site where the home was placed within one year of the applicant's closing date. Those requirements have been removed in the pilot program, allowing program funds to be eligible for covering the cost of transportation and jettisoning the need to establish proof of ownership of a manufactured housing site.

A welcome addition to the suite of federal resources available to disaster survivors for the time being, the pilot program will conclude on July 18, 2025.

Learn more about the USDA's Section 504 program at: <https://bit.ly/3Rek4QG>

Read the most recent *Federal Register* notice concerning the program at: <https://bit.ly/45ZKlpR>

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## **Disaster Housing Recovery Update – September 11, 2023**

### **Hawaii Wildfires**

The Hawaiian island of Maui is still reeling from the impact of catastrophic wildfires – the deadliest in modern U.S. history. Although the fires have now been contained, more than 5,000 people remain displaced in hotel rooms across Maui and throughout Hawaii. The fire destroyed over 2,000 structures, more than 80% of which were homes.

As the initial disaster response begins to transition into the short-term recovery stage, Maui residents are pushing to ensure that the recovery is shaped by their community's values. Given that the disaster recovery system regularly devalues or ignores community input, achieving this aim will require significant effort. Advocates across the continental U.S. have been assisting advocates and community members on the ground in Hawaii to help them navigate the system and ensure that residents are able to advocate effectively on behalf of their community.

The NLIHC-led Disaster Housing Recovery Coalition (DHRC) is a group of over 900 local, state, and national organizations that works to ensure that all disaster survivors receive the assistance they need to fully recover. After holding conversations with impacted people in Hawaii and advocates providing technical assistance to members of the Maui community, the DHRC and the National Housing Law Project will begin hosting a dedicated working group on wildfire recovery in Maui. This working group, which will mirror the DHRC's long-running Puerto Rico working group (created after Hurricane Maria impacted that island in 2017), will establish clear channels of communication with community advocates in Maui, magnify federal advocacy efforts, provide best practices and technical assistance from across the DHRC's nationwide network, and provide support and solidarity for those conducting disaster recovery efforts in the aftermath of the catastrophic fires.

The working group is expected to run for as long as the community deems it beneficial. Members will include impacted residents from Maui and their partners across Hawaii, as well as DHRC members experienced in disaster recovery who are able to provide technical and advocacy assistance. Like the DHRC, the working group will require consensus from impacted community members before adopting advocacy positions or actions. Membership in the group will also be open to all advocates residing in Hawaii and by invitation only for advocates in the continental U.S. To learn more about the working group, please contact NLIHC Senior Policy Analyst for Disaster Recovery Noah Patton at [npatton@nlihc.org](mailto:npatton@nlihc.org)

### **Congressional and National Updates**

September marks [National Preparedness Month](#), an annual opportunity to raise awareness about the importance of preparing for disasters and emergencies.

President Biden issued a National Preparedness Month [proclamation](#) on August 31.

The Ready Campaign's 2023 National Preparedness Month theme is "Take Control in 1, 2, 3." The campaign will focus on preparing older adults for disasters, specifically older adults from communities that are disproportionately impacted by all-hazard events. In support of that aim, FEMA announced an agreement formalizing a [partnership](#) with the Rosalynn Carter Institute for Caregivers.

Disaster recovery funding has been significantly threatened by the House Freedom Caucus's recent demands, which make the prospect of a government shutdown [even more real](#).

The White House increased its [request](#) for FEMA disaster relief fund replenishment from \$12 billion to \$16 billion on September 1, citing recent disasters in Maui, Louisiana, Vermont, and Florida that will bring the projected funding shortfall to \$4.8 billion by the end of the month.

[USB Bank](#) estimated that insured losses in Florida reach approximately \$9.3 billion, and private market insured losses will likely be in the \$3 to \$5 billion range, according to [Moody's RMS](#).

Senator Rick Scott (R-FL) and Senator Marco Rubio (R-FL) [introduced](#) legislation on September 5 that would separate emergency relief funding for natural disasters, including those caused by Hurricane Idalia in Florida and the Hawaii wildfires, from aid for Ukraine. The "Federal Disaster Responsibility Act" would replenish FEMA's disaster relief fund with an additional \$16.5 billion. The bill would also ensure final passage of the "Block Grant Assistance Act," which authorizes the U.S. Department of Agriculture to issue grants to all U.S. agriculture producers affected by natural disasters in 2022. Likewise, the bill would ensure passage of the "Hurricane Tax Relief Act," which would provide disaster-related tax relief to families affected by hurricanes.

The National Institute of Food and Agriculture announced a nearly \$460,000 [investment](#) in three projects in Georgia, Missouri, and Ohio that address disaster preparedness, response, recovery and mitigation in food and agricultural systems.

## **State and Local Updates**

### **The Carolinas**

South Carolina's Charleston Harbor saw the water level [spike](#) more than nine feet as a result of Hurricane Idalia – the fifth highest water level ever recorded in the area, according to the National Weather Service. Meanwhile, between two and five inches of rain fell across portions of southeastern North Carolina, including the Wilmington area.

### **Florida**

HUD [announced](#) that it would implement federal disaster relief for the State of Florida to assist tribal and local recovery efforts in areas affected by Hurricane Idalia. Effective immediately is a 90-day moratorium on foreclosures of mortgages insured by the Federal Housing Administration (FHA), as well as mortgages to Native American borrowers guaranteed under the Section 184 Indian Home Loan Guarantee program. Under HUD's Section 203(h), FHA insurance is available to disaster victims with homes that were destroyed or damaged to an extent that required reconstruction or complete replacement. Administrative flexibility is available to Community Planning and Development grantees, public housing agencies, and Tribes.

The Biden administration has [approved](#) disaster declarations for 14 counties impacted by Hurricane Idalia. At one point, nearly 4,500 people were staying in [shelters](#) in Hurricane Idalia's impact area, according to the Red Cross, with one shelter in Largo, Florida, housing as many as 442 people. Damage was [concentrated](#) in the Nature Coast region (Big Bend, Cedar Key and Pasco counties). In Pasco County alone, between 4,000 and 6,000 homes were inundated.

HUD Secretary [Marcia L. Fudge](#) met with local leaders in Santa Barbara County on September 1 to discuss housing issues and tour supportive housing sites.

President [Biden](#) arrived in Florida on September 2 to tour damage caused by the hurricane.

One mandatory [evacuation](#) order remains in effect in Suwannee County. A voluntary evacuation order remains in effect in Hamilton County. County governments have largely taken over operational control of recovery, and [four](#) shelters are currently open.

The Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF) announced two additional [“flexibilities”](#) to assist storm-impacted SNAP recipients, including a “hot food waiver” that allows SNAP recipients to use EBT benefits to purchase hot foods in 23 counties until the end of September. There will also be an automatic, mass replacement of benefits for individuals in 14 counties who normally receive monthly benefits to eliminate the need for recipients to submit requests individually in severely impacted areas.

## **Georgia**

Senator Jon Ossoff (D-GA) and Senator Raphael Warnock (D-GA) [surveyed](#) damage from Hurricane Idalia on September 3 while pushing for a federal disaster declaration. One storm-related fatality has been confirmed in Georgia after a tree fell on a vehicle in Lowndes County during the hurricane.

## **Hawaii**

More than 5,800 people were [housed](#) overnight at 24 hotel shelter locations around Maui on August 4 in coordination with the American Red Cross, according to recent reports.

Residents who have lost homes are among those [plaintiffs](#) who have filed lawsuits against Maui County, the State of Hawaii, and Hawaii Electric Company, a for-profit, investor-owned utility that serves 95% of the state’s electric customers. Lawyers representing residents and business owners in the devastated town of Lahaina claim that cable TV and phone companies overloaded and destabilized some utility poles, which snapped in high winds and contributed to the fire.

## **Mississippi**

Residents of Rolling Fork are still [waiting](#) on temporary housing five months after a March tornado displaced 300 people (approximately 16% of the city). As of August 16, 233 people were still displaced, according to emergency management officials. Renters make up 68% of the area’s residents and face an especially long wait for temporary housing. FEMA is in the process of bringing online 97 fully furnished, temporary mobile homes and campers for renters and homeowners to live in for 18 months. Nearly 100 households had requested a trailer as of August 16, by which point FEMA had delivered 36 units to private landowners and people in commercial trailer parks.

## **Vermont**

Many Vermonters affected by the July flooding are still in the throes of flood [recovery](#), with some continuing to seek shelter. So far, FEMA has determined more than 2,900 homes in the state had some type of damage, based on applications and housing inspections, including 530 that have been designated as having major damage and 14 that were destroyed. Approximately 1,280 households have received rental assistance from FEMA, indicating just how many people cannot currently live in their homes, according to the governor’s press secretary. FEMA is

bringing in manufactured homes and searching for apartment buildings that can be leased and renovated to accommodate flood victims. The agency says around 225 people are eligible for temporary housing, but half of these have found other housing solutions.

Residents of nine counties included in a federal disaster declaration have until October 12 to apply for individual assistance, FEMA [announced](#) Friday after state officials requested an extension. FEMA Individual Assistance is [available](#) to homeowners and renters in the nine counties included in the federal government's major disaster declaration: Caledonia, Chittenden, Lamoille, Orange, Orleans, Rutland, Washington, Windham, and Windsor counties. Residents of other counties affected by summer flooding, such as Addison County, have so far been excluded.

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## **Our Homes, Our Votes**

### **New Voting Rights Legislation Promotes Access to Voting among Unhoused Individuals and Federally Assisted Renters**

Representative Nikema Williams (GA-05) introduced a [comprehensive voting rights legislation package](#) on August 25 that includes two NLIHC-endorsed bills to promote voter participation among unhoused voters and federally assisted renters. The introduction of the package coincided with the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, a landmark event in the movement to enact civil rights legislation like the “Voting Rights Act of 1965” and the “Fair Housing Act of 1968.” The package includes the NLIHC-endorsed “[Unhoused Voter Opportunity Through Elections Act](#)” (Unhoused VOTE Act) ([H.R. 5294](#)) and the “[Voters on the Move Registration Act](#)” ([H.R. 5290](#)).

The Unhoused VOTE Act affirms that no person may be denied the right to vote because they do not have a traditional home. The bill requires that election officials in jurisdictions with ballot drop boxes consult with service providers to consider accessibility to unhoused people when determining the location, number, and operating hours of drop boxes. In states that require voters to show proof of residence, election officials must accept individuals' written attestation of their residence, signed under penalty of perjury. The bill also requires that states treat any documents issued by an entity of the criminal justice system as fulfilling voter ID requirements.

The Unhoused VOTE Act would require states to allow an individual residing in a homeless shelter to use the shelter as their residence for the purpose of voting in federal elections. Chief state election officials must ensure that each election official's public website includes an accessible, clear, and separate hyperlink with simple information on how unhoused individuals may register and vote in federal elections held in the state. States and political subdivisions that are required to provide voting materials in a language other than English, in accordance with Section 203 of the Voting Rights Act, must also publish information for unhoused voters in that language. Chief state election officials must also send a notification of the voter registration deadline to each homeless shelter in the state, as well as local social services agencies that commonly serve unhoused individuals, at least 60 days prior to the voter registration deadline for any federal election in that state, and to send a notice at least 30 days prior to any federal election.

The bill requires the Election Assistance Commission (EAC) and U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) to develop best practices for election officials to facilitate unhoused citizens' voter registration and participation. When developing these best practices, the EAC must consult with individuals who have experienced homelessness and with local shelters and agencies that serve unhoused individuals.

The Unhoused VOTE Act also amends the "National Voter Registration Act of 1993" to treat emergency shelters as voter registration agencies, which are required to distribute voter registration forms, offer assistance with voter registration applications, and accept completed forms for transmittal to state election officials. The bill clarifies that unsheltered individuals may register to vote with their street location as their place of residence, which establishes their eligibility to vote in the jurisdictions in which they reside. The bill also requires that recipients of HUD homeless assistance funding collect information on the extent to which individuals experiencing homelessness are able to register and vote in federal elections through their homeless management information systems (HMIS).

Finally, the bill creates an EAC grant program to support state and local governments' activities that facilitate access to voting for individuals experiencing homelessness. To qualify for grant funding, applicants must have a plan to engage stakeholders with experience serving unhoused individuals and must ensure that any documents for unhoused individuals will remain readable and usable even if subjected to extended outdoor exposure.

The Unhoused VOTE Act is endorsed by NLIHC and a coalition of more than 100 housing and homelessness, voting rights, civil rights, faith-based, and other organizations. The bill has 45 original cosponsors in the U.S. House of Representatives. Senator Cory Booker (D-NJ) is expected to introduce a companion bill in the U.S. Senate.

The "[Voters on the Move Registration Act of 2023](#)" requires the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) and the EAC to develop a uniform statement with information on voter registration and voting rights, which will be made available to residents of public and federally assisted housing. The statement must be translated into the 10 languages most commonly spoken by individuals with limited English proficiency, and all translated versions must be made publicly available on the CFPB website. Public housing agencies (PHAs) and owners of federally assisted properties must provide a copy of the uniform statement when residents sign their leases or fill out income verification forms, and owners of properties with federally backed multifamily mortgage loans must provide a copy to renters at the time that their lease is signed. PHAs must provide a copy of the statement to Housing Choice Voucher holders when their voucher is issued and when they are given an income verification form. A creditor that receives an application for a residential mortgage loan must also provide a copy of the uniform statement to the loan applicant within five days of receiving the application.

The bill has 53 original cosponsors in the U.S. House of Representatives. Senator Reverend Raphael Warnock introduced a companion bill in the U.S. Senate in the 117<sup>th</sup> Congress (see [Memo, 6/1/21](#)).

The Unhoused VOTE Act and Voters on the Move Registration Act of 2023 are closely aligned with the mission of NLIHC's *Our Homes, Our Votes* campaign, a nonpartisan initiative to boost

voter turnout among low-income renters and educate candidates about housing solutions. Renters consistently register and turn out to vote at lower rates than homeowners, in part because they move more frequently than homeowners and must re-register to vote at their new address (see [Memo, 5/15](#)). Voter turnout disparities are even greater between low-income citizens and high-income citizens, largely due to obstacles such as voter identification requirements, transportation barriers, and inflexible schedules. Closing the voter turnout gap is essential to building the political will for housing solutions that serve the lowest-income people. To achieve this goal, the *Our Homes, Our Votes* campaign provides resources and trainings that equip advocates, tenant leaders, and service providers to register, educate, and mobilize low-income renters and unhoused people to vote.

For more information on the *Our Homes, Our Votes* campaign, visit: <https://www.ourhomes-ourvotes.org/>

Find Representative Williams's press release on the comprehensive voting rights package [here](#).

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## **Native American Housing**

### **HUD Announces Indian Housing Block Grant Competitive Awards for 22 Tribal Communities**

HUD has announced \$128 million in Indian Housing Block Grant (IHBG) Competitive grant awards to 22 different Tribes and Tribally-Designated Housing Entities (TDHEs). HUD Secretary Marcia L. Fudge announced the awards during a recent visit to the Kenaitze Indian Tribe in Kenai, Alaska. The IHBG Competitive grants supplement IHBG Formula funds and are targeted to new housing construction in Native communities. According to HUD's [press release](#), 94% of the IHBG Competitive awards have been channeled towards supporting the construction of new housing units, addressing a pressing need across Indian country.

The IHBG Competitive Grant was created by the U.S. Congress as part of the fiscal year (FY) 2018 omnibus spending package and directed HUD to award grants to tribes based on need and capacity. Due in part to the leadership of Senator Mike Rounds (R-SD), the program allows TDHEs to build and rehabilitate desperately needed affordable homes for American Indians and Alaska Natives (see *Memo, 11/5/2018*). Funding for the IHBG program increased from \$100 million in FY21 to \$150 million in FY23, thanks to advocacy from tribal housing leaders.

This year's awards represent a significant investment in Tribal housing. Awards range from \$2.2 million for the Housing Authority of the Absentee Shawnee Tribe in Oklahoma, to \$7.5 million, the ceiling amount for the grant (as stated in the [Notice of Funding Opportunity](#)). Ten Tribes received the maximum grant amount, including the Tlingit Haida Regional Housing Authority and Kenaitze-Salamatof TDHE in Alaska, Tohono O'odham Ki:Ki and White Mountain Apache Housing Authority in Arizona, Fort Hall Housing Authority in Idaho, Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians in Michigan, Taos Pueblo in New Mexico, Warm Springs Housing Authority in Oregon, and Lummi Nation Housing Authority and Port Gamble S'Klallam Housing Authority in Washington State.

See the full list of awardees and descriptions of each project [here](#).

Read HUD's press release at: <https://tinyurl.com/393zffa6>

Explore the list of Tribal awardees at: <https://tinyurl.com/3m66me7e>

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## Events

### **Join Next Monday's (9/18) "Tenant Talk Live" on Section 202 Supportive Housing for the Elderly Program**

NLIHC will host the next session of "Tenant Talk Live" – a webinar for tenant and resident leaders – on Monday, September 18, at 6 pm ET. The webinar will focus on Section 202, a HUD-administered program designed to provide affordable housing to older adults with extremely low incomes. NLIHC staff will be joined by Linda Couch, vice president of housing and aging services policy at LeadingAge. Register for next Monday's Tenant Talk Live webinar [here](#).

LeadingAge is a coalition comprising aging service providers and various organizations dedicated to serving older adults. In her position at LeadingAge, Linda plays a pivotal role in shaping the organization's housing policies and strategic priorities. She works closely with congressional leaders on Capitol Hill, engages with top-level officials at HUD, and interacts with key federal agencies. Linda's primary mission is to ensure that federally assisted elderly housing policies are given adequate attention and support. In addition to her involvement at the federal level, Linda works with LeadingAge members to keep them informed about the latest developments in federal policies. She actively seeks their input on policies to ensure that LeadingAge's policy agenda aligns with the needs of its members. Among the many issues Linda addresses in her advocacy work, Section 202 is a top priority.

Section 202 Supportive Housing for the Elderly is a HUD program that extends funding to nonprofit organizations to establish and maintain housing for older adults with extremely low incomes. The program, established in the "Housing Act of 1959," provides a way for older adults to stay housed without being displaced or institutionalized. Between the years of 2012 and 2016, Section 202 did not receive any funding, which resulted in rental assistance contracts expiring. The House's FY24 budget bill would include \$913 million for Section 202, which would result in a cut of \$162 million from 2023's federal budget. If this funding cut were to be enacted, it would result in older adults losing their housing assistance, putting them at higher risk for housing instability, eviction, or in some cases homelessness.

During next Monday's webinar, Linda will guide participants through what the Section 202 program is, explain why expanding funding for the program is important, and share tools and resources for older adults seeking affordable housing.

"Tenant Talk Live" webinars are held the first and third Monday of every month at 6 pm ET. For information on future topics, visit our website: <https://nlihc.org/tenant-talk-live-webinar>. To stay

up to date on “Tenant Talk Live” events and connect with other attendees, join the [Tenant Talk Facebook group](#).

“Tenant Talk Live” would not be possible without tenants like you! We strive to connect and engage with residents and tenant leaders through our webinars. If you are a low-income tenant and have a topic you would like to propose for an upcoming “Tenant Talk Live,” or if you would like to participate as a speaker on an upcoming call or webinar, please email: [sbetancourt@nlihc.org](mailto:sbetancourt@nlihc.org). Webinars like “Tenant Talk Live” also depend on the support of our members. Become an NLIHC member [here](#)!

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## HUD

### HUD PIH Expands Use of Emergency Housing Voucher Service Fees

HUD’s Office of Public and Indian Housing (PIH) issued [Notice PIH 2023-23](#), adding two new activities that may be funded with Emergency Housing Voucher (EHV) service fees. The Notice also expands the descriptions of several existing eligible activities, providing additional uses for the service fees. The EHV program provides a public housing agency (PHA) with a one-time fee equal to \$3,500 for each EHV allocated to it. The new Notice amends [Notice PIH 2021-15](#), which provides the overall operating requirements for PHAs that administer the EHV program (see *Memo 5/10/21*). Notice PIH 2023-23 repeats the provisions of the EHV service fee-eligible activities in Notice PIH 2021-15 Section 6(d), with the revisions shown in red italic text.

The “American Rescue Plan Act of 2021” (ARPA) appropriated \$5 billion for new incremental EHV, their renewal, and fees for the cost of administering EHV and other eligible expenses to prevent, prepare, and respond to the COVID-19 pandemic to facilitate leasing of the emergency vouchers, such as security deposit assistance and other costs related to retention and support of participating property owners.

One of the new eligible uses of the EHV service fee is to pay a landlord all or some of the rental arrears of a household applying for EHV – but only if the arrears create a barrier to leasing the EHV unit. Another new eligible use is to reduce barriers that households face in keeping their unit with an EHV, for example by providing a household with case management, wrap-around services, or financial stability training, or by preventing eviction by paying for property damage.

A revision under the “pre-tenancy services” category of existing eligible uses allows a PHA to use the EHV service fee to cover landlord application fees or to pay fees for a household to obtain vital documents needed to establish their eligibility for the program, such as the cost of obtaining a birth certificate.

As part of housing search assistance, a PHA may provide housing mobility services to encourage households to move to high opportunity neighborhoods. As part of owner incentives, a PHA may use the fee to provide an incentive payment to an owner who has an accessible unit or to an owner who will make a unit accessible to a person with a disability. As part of moving expenses,

the EHV service fee may be used to pay for storage expenses and lock change fees. And, as part of essential household items, the Notice adds furniture, toiletries, and cleaning supplies.

Read Notice PIH 2023-23 at: <https://tinyurl.com/5ym5n4ew>

Find the PIH EHV website at: <https://www.hud.gov/ehv>

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## **HUD Announces NSPIRE Inspection Resident Feedback Survey**

HUD announced a new [survey](#) to obtain feedback from residents whose homes were inspected under the new National Standards for the Physical Inspection of Real Estate (NSPIRE) inspection process. [Notice PIH 2023-24/H-2023-10](#) explains that HUD intends to use a new Inspection Feedback Survey (“Survey”) to identify and address residents’ “pain points” in the inspection process and to guide HUD’s efforts to improve residents’ general satisfaction with their housing conditions. HUD’s goal is to ensure the voices of residents in HUD-assisted housing are given the same representation as the voices of other stakeholders. The Notice states that HUD recognizes the importance of direct resident involvement in creating a positive living environment and in advancing the overall mission of affordable housing.

NSPIRE is replacing HUD’s former physical inspections standards, the Uniform Physical Conditions Standards (UPCS) and the Housing Quality Standards (HQS). NSPIRE inspections of public housing units began on July 1, 2023. On October 1, NSPIRE inspections will begin for private multifamily properties assisted with Section 8 Project-Based Rental Assistance; Section 202 Supportive Housing for the Elderly; Section 202 Direct Loans; Section 811 Supportive Housing for Persons with Disabilities; the HOME Investment Partnerships Program; the national Housing Trust Fund; Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS; Emergency Solutions Grants; the Continuum of Care program; and mortgages insured or held by HUD. The Survey will not be offered to residents assisted with a Housing Choice Voucher or a Project-Based Voucher because public housing agencies (PHAs) conduct the physical inspections for those programs. Project-Based Contract Administrators (PBCAs) or HUD inspectors conduct physical inspections for the other programs.

The Notice indicates that HUD staff hosted workshops with resident council members to gather input about the Survey questions, questionnaire format, and the Survey instrument. The Survey is designed to take approximately five minutes, with residents replying to only four questions and indicating “Strongly Agree” to “Strongly Disagree” along a five-point scale when appropriate:

- I was present during the HUD inspection process of my unit – yes or no.
- I trust HUD to provide housing that is safe and habitable.
- How would you rate your satisfaction with your housing conditions?
- How would you rate your satisfaction with HUD’s inspection process?

There is also an open-ended question enabling residents to indicate whether they would like to share anything else with HUD. If residents respond to the open-ended question indicating

persistent conditions that impact the health and safety of residents, HUD might decide to inspect a property.

Under NSPIRE, only a random sample of units in a property will be inspected, along with five units recommended by a resident organization; only residents of these units will receive the Survey. [Survey Flyers](#) will be placed by inspectors on a kitchen counter or another noticeable location in an inspected unit. The Survey Flyer has a link and a QR code to the actual survey. Participation in the survey is voluntary and anonymous.

The Notice states that HUD will confirm with PHA management whether there are people with a disability who need an alternative communication method. While the Survey Flyer will have common language translations indicating that language access to the Survey is available, HUD will also consult with PHA management to determine whether there are any limited English proficient (LEP) residents who may need materials in additional languages. NLIHC notes that PHAs will not be aware of people with disabilities or LEP residents at the many other non-public housing properties subject to NSPIRE inspections. HUD should instruct PBCAs to engage in similar consultation with property owners of buildings they inspect.

If a public housing resident does not have broadband internet or internet devices at home, the Notice reminds PHAs that their Operating Funds and Capital Funds may be used to make purchases and provide access to services and devices. Learning how to use the devices is not discussed, nor does the reminder help the many residents of non-public housing properties subject to NSPIRE inspections.

If residents experience health and safety violations requiring follow-up, they may contact the REAC Technical Assistance Center (TAC) at 1-888-245-4860 or REACTAC@hud.gov to request HUD's intervention.

HUD published final overall NSPIRE regulations on May 11, 2023 (see *Memo*, [5/15](#)). Two *Federal Register* notices and one PIH/Housing Notice supplement the final rule.

- HUD published a physical Standards notice, along with a link to 295 pages of detailed “[inspectable items](#),” on June 22 (see *Memo*, [6/26](#)).
- An Administrative Procedures Notice was posted on June (see *Memo*, [7/10](#)).
- A Scoring notice was published on July 7 (see *Memo*, [7/17](#)).

Read Notice PIH 2023-24/H-2023-10 at: <https://tinyurl.com/2xaespm7>

The HUD Inspection Feedback Survey is at: <https://tinyurl.com/ywwf6upu>

The Survey Flyer is at: <https://tinyurl.com/38swbupu>

NLIHC's summary of key provisions of the final NSPIRE rule is at: <https://bit.ly/3Oweh7H>

HUD's NSPIRE website is at: <https://bit.ly/2V9qvV3>

More information about all HUD programs subject to the new NSPIRE rule is available in NLIHC's [2023 Advocates' Guide](#).

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## Emergency Rental Assistance

### Nearly Three-Fourths of ERA2 Funds Expended

The U.S. Department of the Treasury (Treasury) released the Quarter 1 2023 Compliance Report for the tranche of emergency rental assistance funds passed by the “American Rescue Plan Act” (ERA2). Treasury reports that since March 2021 nearly \$15.3 billion in ERA2 funds have been expended on financial assistance to households, housing stability services, and administrative expenses by state, local, and territorial grantees. This amount represents nearly 71% of the \$21.55 billion available under ERA2. According to the new data, the overall amount of ERA1 and ERA2 expended has increased to more than \$38 billion.

ERA2 spending data through March 2023 reveal that nearly half of state grantees, and the District of Columbia, have reported expending 75% or more of their allocation on financial assistance to households, housing stability services, and administrative costs. Yet two state grantees – Ohio and Iowa – have reported expending less than 10% of available funds. Local grantees report spending 70% of their funds. Overall, Treasury reports that nearly \$15.3 billion of ERA2 funds have been spent on these activities. NLIHC analysis identified approximately 22 grantees that reported ERA2 spending in prior quarters but not in Quarter 1 2023. This has resulted in nearly \$290 million not being captured in the new report and suggests that the total amount of funds expended has likely been underreported. Treasury notes that all data are presented as reported by each ERA2 grantee and are preliminary.

[Treasury guidance](#) allows grantees that have spent 75% of their total ERA2 funds for financial assistance to use the remaining, unobligated funds for “affordable rental housing and eviction prevention purposes.” The Quarter 1 2023 Compliance Report indicates that 16 state and four local grantees are using ERA2 funds for the construction, rehabilitation, or preservation of rental housing projects, or for the operation of these projects. Expenditure and obligation data are available for three of these 20 grantees. These three grantees – the State of Maryland; Cuyahoga County, Ohio; and the State of West Virginia – have expended or obligated over \$31.5 million for affordable rental housing projects. Three grantees are using ERA2 funds, beyond those set aside for housing stability services, for eviction prevention programs. Nearly \$3.8 million has been expended or obligated to these programs thus far.

Quarter 1 2023 Compliance Report also includes demographic data of households served with ERA2 funds since March 2021. Overall, nearly half (45%) of households served were Black or African American, nearly a third (33%) were white, and 16% were Hispanic or Latino. Almost two-thirds of households served (62%) had extremely low incomes.

The Quarter 1 2023 Compliance Report can be accessed at: <http://tinyurl.com/mr2sxx8y>

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## NLIHC, HIP, and RF Publish Joint Report on Tenant and Landlord Experiences of ERA Program

NLIHC, the Housing Initiative at Penn (HIP), and the Reinvestment Fund (RF) released a report on August 31 exploring tenant and landlord experiences with the U.S. Department of the Treasury's (Treasury) Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) Program. The report, *Beyond Housing Stability: Understanding Tenant and Landlord Experiences and the Impact of ERA*, finds that Treasury's ERA program offered a vital lifeline to tenants and landlords during the pandemic, improving outcomes in areas well beyond housing stability, including financial security, child well-being, and overall health. Read the report [here](#).

With the arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic, millions of low-income renters fell behind on rent and were left at risk of eviction. In response, the federal government created the Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) Program – a temporary initiative administered by Treasury to help low-income renters address rent and utility arrears – and appropriated an unprecedented \$46.55 billion in funding. With guidance from Treasury, state and local governments designed and scaled up systems to distribute the aid to renters and landlords, a significant undertaking during a global pandemic.

The new report uses administrative and survey data to evaluate how tenants and landlords experienced the ERA program at ten sites around the country: Allegheny County, Pennsylvania; Denver County, Colorado; Louisville/Jefferson County, Kentucky; Northern Ponca Housing Authority; the State of Oregon; Baltimore County, Maryland; Come Dream Come Build in Cameron County, Texas; Charlotte-Mecklenburg County, North Carolina; the State of Connecticut; and Byrd Barr Place in King County, Washington. In addition to describing the characteristics of renter households that applied for ERA through the study sites, the report illuminates the experiences of tenants who applied for ERA, including their likelihood of receiving assistance, and measures the impact of ERA on short-term tenant outcomes, including housing stability, financial security, physical and mental health, access to healthcare, and child well-being.

The report shows that survey respondents who received support from the ERA program experienced more positive short-term outcomes than those who did not. Tenants who received ERA funding were more likely to be living in their own apartment or home (as opposed to living with family or friends or being unhoused), were less likely to owe back rent, and were less worried about their overall housing status at the time of the survey. Likewise, after controlling for other factors like age, language, race, and ethnicity, tenants who received ERA were 40% more likely than those who did not receive assistance to report that their health and well-being were the same or better than a year ago. Landlords surveyed for the report also benefited from the program, explaining that they received invaluable support from ERA at a time when they were struggling to collect rents and meet financial obligations. Tenants and landlords felt that ERA provided essential support, stabilizing renter households in the short term and providing landlords with a degree of financial security.

The report provides suggestions for future housing stability programs and policy recommendations as well. The report recommends, for example, that state and local jurisdictions work to retain the infrastructure that was created during Treasury's ERA program and incorporate emergency rental assistance as a part of the continuum of state and local housing assistance and homelessness prevention interventions. Likewise, HUD should investigate the effectiveness of flexibilities applied in the ERA program – such as self-attestation, fact-specific

proxy, categorical eligibility, and direct-to-tenant assistance – in increasing the accessibility of these programs for tenants and landlords. The report concludes by urging Congress to enact a permanent emergency rental assistance program to help stabilize households experiencing sudden financial shocks before they result in eviction, instability, or homelessness.

Read the report [here](#).

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## From the Field

### **City of Boise Enacts Three New Tenant Protections; Advocates Continue Push for Source-of-Income Ordinance**

The City Council of Boise, Idaho, [voted unanimously](#) to adopt [three new tenant protections](#) on August 15. Collectively, the new protections will bar landlords from retaliating against renters who make repair requests, require landlords to return renters' security deposits when buildings are demolished, and mandate that landlords provide renters with a city document outlining their rights and responsibilities. The new protections will take effect on January 1, 2024.

City officials and advocates celebrated the passage of the new protections. “Tenant protections are relevant not only to individual renters and landlords, but also to businesses for whom housing stability for their employees often translates to workforce stability; to institutions of higher education, whose students and staff are often reliant on the rental housing market; and to any Boiseans who want to live in a community where it is possible for people to access housing and to stay in their homes,” said Nicki Olivier Hellenkamp, housing advisor to the mayor of Boise.

“Boise city officials have taken some courageous (but necessary) positions in the past year to encourage a broader spectrum of housing availability and to provide better support to tenants and landlords, from the application fees/process requirements to the newly enacted protections of non-retaliation, security deposits, and a very practical requirement for communicating rights and responsibilities of all parties,” said Denise Caruzzi, past president of the Boise/Ada County Homeless Coalition and a member of NLIHC. Caruzzi also noted the need for further action and expressed hope that the passage of an initial suite of tenant protections will open the door for a source-of-income ordinance.

The provision prohibiting retaliatory conduct aims to ensure that renters can request repairs and raise safety concerns without fear of retaliation. Under this new protection, landlords cannot retaliate against renters who raise concerns about potential code violations, make repair requests, become a member of a community resident association, or retain counsel. Retaliatory actions that the ordinance prohibits include terminating a tenancy, refusing to renew a lease, raising rent, decreasing services, or harassing tenants.

The City Council enacted the security deposit return provision to support tenants who are permanently displaced by an owner's decision to demolish or substantially renovate a building. The ordinance establishes a rebuttable presumption that security deposits will be returned in full when an owner decides to conduct a demolition or a renovation that will result in displacement.

The ordinance includes an exception that could require damages for any property that could realistically be reused by the landlord following the repairs or renovations.

To ensure that all parties know their rights and responsibilities when entering into a lease agreement, the City of Boise will require that landlords provide new tenants with a notice of landlord and tenant responsibilities. The city will create, maintain, and publish an online version of the document. Landlords will be required to provide the URL link to the tenant, or a printed copy upon request. The city will soon undertake the process of developing a concise document that summarizes landlords' and tenants' rights and responsibilities under city and state law, as well as other relevant resources.

The City Council [discussed a fourth proposal](#) to prohibit source-of-income discrimination – that is, the denial of a tenancy based on an applicant's lawful, verifiable source of income. Federal fair housing law does not prevent discrimination against prospective tenants who would pay rent with Housing Choice Vouchers or other subsidies. This form of discrimination is often a facially race-neutral proxy for racial discrimination and an obstacle to achieving housing stability for recipients of housing assistance. While [dozens of states and cities](#) have enacted their own bans on source-of-income discrimination in recent years, neither the State of Idaho nor any municipalities within Idaho have outlawed this practice so far. Boise's proposed source-of-income ordinance would prevent landlords from denying a rental application solely because a tenant would pay their rent using housing subsidies, child support, veterans' benefits, or any other verifiable and lawful source of income.

“In these times of high rents and low vacancy rates, voucher holders often fall way down on a list of applicants,” said Caruzzi, commenting on the need for a source-of-income ordinance to follow the protections that were passed in August. “These particular provisions typically benefit both tenants and landlords as they encourage neighborhood (and family) stability, more dispersed housing opportunities, reduce vacancies and turnover, and minimize the increased costs to *all* of us when housing is unavailable to some of us.”

Many representatives of social services organizations, renters, and advocates testified in support of the source-of-income discrimination ordinance in the August 15 meeting, while landlords and investors expressed concerns about administrative burdens. Council members were generally supportive of new source-of-income protections and voted to send the measure back for revision. Before the measure comes up for another vote, council members will work out remaining details, including applicability to smaller landlords. Advocates will continue to push for enactment of source-of-income protections as the measure returns to the City Council for further consideration.

Boise's passage of three new tenant protections builds on the momentum created by the passage of more than 200 state and local tenant protections since January 2021. The End Rental Arrears to Stop Evictions (ERASE) Project at NLIHC has been working to track protections passed across the country in its [State and Local Tenant Protections Database](#). The ERASE Project was formed in January 2021 to ensure that the historic \$46.6 billion in emergency rental assistance aid enacted by Congress reached those extremely low-income and most marginalized people for whom it was intended. Through a coalition of state and local partners, the ERASE Project has been working closely with its partners this year, including the [Idaho Center for Fiscal Policy](#), to

advocate for the passage of stronger tenant protections. These protections include a new Idaho state law, SB 1039, that will require any fees imposed on tenants to be reasonable and that will create greater transparency about fees (see [Memo, 4/3](#)).

Find more information about the ERASE campaign and tenant protections [here](#).

Learn about the process leading up to the enactment of Boise's new tenant protections [here](#).

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## Opportunity Starts at Home

### Urban Institute Research Reveals Effects of Housing Costs on Teacher Attitudes and Turnover Rates

The [Urban Institute](#) has released research revealing the links between escalating housing costs and patterns of economic anxiety among teachers, particularly in high-cost urban areas. In addition to assessing the prevalence of economic anxiety among teachers, the study assesses how such anxiety relates to teacher attitudes, behaviors, and turnover rates by using survey data drawn from the San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD). Read the article [here](#).

The study finds that teachers were less likely to own a home, more likely to be renters, and more likely to have a longer commute when compared to other workers. Nearly half of teachers reported consistent anxiety over their current financial situation compared to the national sample of employed adults. The study also finds that teachers with frequent anxiety had a lower regard for teaching and were more likely to leave the school district compared to teachers with less anxiety. The researchers conclude by encouraging greater collaboration between affordable housing programs, school districts, and policymakers.

Read the article [here](#).

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## Research

### Research Finds Patterns of Racial Inequality in Housing Subsidy Programs

Researchers from the University of Illinois at Chicago, Ball State University, and Washington University in St. Louis published a new study investigating racial inequality in subsidized housing units and whether this inequality is particularly pronounced in specific subsidy programs. Using restricted data from the American Housing Survey (AHS) and American Community Survey (ACS), the researchers found that white renters have disproportionately better access to higher quality units at lower costs. The researchers also found that subsidized renters of color tended to live in more racially segregated neighborhoods.

To assess the persistence of racial inequality in subsidized housing, the researchers linked geocoded, restricted versions of the U.S. Census Bureau's 2017 AHS and ACS. The researchers evaluated the number of unsafe or unhealthy conditions in a rental unit (e.g., problems related to

heating, plumbing, and electrical systems), housing cost and rent affordability, and neighborhood segregation. Differences in neighborhood poverty rates, vacancy rates, and incomes were also taken into consideration.

Households of color are overrepresented among subsidized renters compared to white households. Yet the researchers observed significant disparities impacting households of color in subsidized housing programs in terms of housing quality, cost, and neighborhood segregation. The researchers found that subsidized white renters lived in units with fewer unsafe conditions and are charged less for these units, all else being equal, compared to American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN), Black, and Latinx renters. On average, AI/AN, Black, and Latinx subsidized renters all had more than one unsafe condition in their housing units, while white and Asian renters had fewer than one. Despite living in units with more unsafe housing conditions, Latinx subsidized renters paid \$110 more a month than white subsidized renters. Similarly, Black renters paid \$75 more a month than their white counterparts. The researchers also observed racial segregation among subsidized renters. White subsidized renters lived in neighborhoods that were nearly 70% white on average, while Asian, Black, and Latinx subsidized renters lived in neighborhoods that were, on average, 30% white.

The researchers examined a range of factors that could have contributed to these observed racial and ethnic disparities. For example, to examine how differences in renter demographics might contribute to racial inequality, the researchers considered how age, household composition, marital status, and citizenship status might influence unit quality, unit cost, and segregation. Similarly, to identify the role property features might play in observed racial inequality, the researchers considered the decade the property was built, whether the building was a multi-unit structure, and the total number of rooms in a unit. The researchers looked for segregation across subsidy programs since differences in program policies and contexts might contribute to inequities. They also considered contextual factors such as neighborhood poverty rates. Ultimately, the researchers found that these factors explained some, but not all, of the racial inequality observed among subsidized renters. This suggests unobserved factors, such as bureaucratic processes, might contribute to racial disparities in subsidized housing programs.

The authors call for further research to investigate the bureaucratic processes that may be contributing to racial segregation in HUD subsidy programs with the goal of determining interventions to promote equity and integration within subsidized housing. The authors also point to steps government agencies could take to promote integration, such as integrating developments across age and family composition, as well as investing in AI/AN housing developments.

Read the report at: <https://tinyurl.com/3u33dcyr>

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## **Fact of the Week**

### **Children in Households with Emergency Rental Assistance Less Likely to Exhibit Signs of Stress**

Source: NLIHC, Housing Initiative at Penn, & Reinvestment Fund. (2023). *Beyond Housing Stability: Understanding Tenant and Landlord Experiences and the Impact of Emergency Rental Assistance*.

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## **NLIHC in the News**

### **NLIHC in the News for the Weeks of August 27 and September 3**

The following are some of the news stories to which NLIHC contributed during the weeks of August 27 and September 3:

- “When subsidized housing isn’t safe, renters struggle to get help from HUD” *Street Light*, August 29 at: <https://tinyurl.com/cz7nkzrs>
  - “Will Utah do anything to help struggling renters now that emergency federal money has dried up?” *Head Topics*, August 30 at: <https://tinyurl.com/3nhkyw6j>
  - “Rents are falling more slowly in U.S. suburbs than in cities. Here’s why.” *CBS News*, September 7 at: <https://tinyurl.com/478rra4s>
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## **NLIHC News**

### **NLIHC Welcomes Evan Martinez as Field Intern**

NLIHC is pleased to welcome Evan Martinez as field intern for the 2023-2024 academic year. Evan is currently completing a master’s degree in social work at the University of Maryland, Baltimore, and is specializing in community action and social policy. He holds a bachelor’s degree in English and applied psychology and human development from Boston College. Before joining NLIHC, Evan worked as a school social work intern in the Baltimore City Public School system, where he served the city’s growing population of immigrant and refugee students and their families. While conducting casework, he witnessed the obstacles faced by students and their families when trying to access basic resources, including housing. During his time with NLIHC, Evan hopes to gain skills and knowledge that will help him become a more effective advocate for marginalized people who are trying to access quality housing.

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### **NLIHC Welcomes Isabel Webb Carey as Policy Intern for Disaster Recovery**

NLIHC is excited to welcome Isabel Webb Carey as our first-ever policy intern for disaster recovery. Isabel is a fourth-year student at the University of Texas at Austin, where she

collaborates with local and student governments to address housing affordability and accessibility issues. Her previous professional experiences include internships with Bloomberg News and Pew Research Center, which allowed her to garner experience in macroeconomic policy and research. Isabel is a connector who strives to center community and equity in all her endeavors. We are thrilled to have Isabel join the NLIHC team!

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## **NLIHC Welcomes Tia Turner as Policy Intern**

NLIHC is pleased to welcome Tia Turner as policy intern. Tia is completing a master's degree in sociology at Arizona State University and will begin attending the Howard University School of Law in 2024. While helping mobilize and educate unhoused residents in Huntsville, Alabama, in the months before the 2020 elections, Tia witnessed several encampment closures and saw first-hand their negative impacts on the unhoused community. Her experiences in Alabama made her a zealous advocate for housing justice, and she soon co-founded Love Huntsville, an organization that directly serves the unhoused community. Tia understands that the road ahead may be long, but the pursuit of housing justice is a noble and necessary endeavor. Before entering her graduate program, Tia earned a bachelor's degree in psychology at the University of Alabama in Huntsville.

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## **Where to Find Us – September 11**

- Ability Housing, Inc. Annual Summit – Kissimmee, FL, September 12-13 (Diane Yentel)
- [National Alliance of Resident Services in Affordable and Assisted Housing \(NAR-SAAH\) Conference 2023](#) – New Orleans, LA, September 12-15 (Sid Betancourt)
- [New York Downstate Independent Housing Forum](#) – Virtual, September 13 (Lindsay Duvall)
- Wisconsin Council on Physical Disabilities September Housing Committee Meeting – Virtual, September 18 (Courtney Cooperman)
- [Neighborhood Preservation Coalition of New York Annual Conference](#) – Saratoga Springs, NY, September 19 (Lindsay Duvall)
- New York Regional Housing Collaborative – New York, NY, September 20 (Lindsay Duvall)
- [Housing Oregon Industry Support Conference](#) – Portland, OR, September 27 (Courtney Cooperman)
- National Coalition for the Homeless Conference – Washington, DC, September 30 (Diane Yentel)
- [Housing Washington](#) – Tacoma, WA, October 5 (Brooke Schipporeit)
- Habitat for Humanity of the Greater La Crosse Region Advocacy Committee Meeting – Virtual, October 20 (Courtney Cooperman)
- [Southern California Association of Non-Profit Housing](#) – Los Angeles, CA, November 3 (Sarah Saadian)
- [Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency](#) Conference – Hershey, PA, December 7 (Sarah Saadian)

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Tia Turner, Policy Intern  
Chantelle Wilkinson, OSAH Campaign Director, x230  
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