

MEMO OF MEMBERS

The Weekly Newsletter of the National Low Income Housing Coalition

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National Housing Trust Fund

NHTF Gains 200th Co-Sponsor; Bipartisan Support Increases

With the addition of a number of Members of Congress this week, National Housing Trust Fund legislation now has a remarkable 200 co-sponsors. The newest cosponsors of H.R. 1102 are Representatives Jo Ann Emerson (R-MO), Denise Majette (D-GA), Charles Pickering (R-MS), Loretta Sanchez (D-CA), Peter Visclosky (D-IN), and David Wu (D-OR). The sponsorship of these Members means that the bipartisanship of the bill continues to increase; of the 200 cosponsors, there are now 188 Democrats, 11 Republicans, and 1 Independent. Details are available at www.nhtf.org.



Capitol Hill

District Work Period Underway

Both the House and Senate have adjourned for the Memorial Day District Work Period, which extends through the week of May 26. Both chambers are due to return to session on Monday, June 2.

Tax Cut Deal Passes Full of Gimmicks and Giveaways; Housing Tax Credit Appears Safe

According to news reports, President Bush and Vice President Cheney were crucial in the completion of compromise tax cut legislation. With the tax bills passing the House and Senate far apart in size and substance, pressure from the executive branch was necessary to reach a compromise that would stick, *CQ Today* reported. In the early hours of May 23, the House passed the conference report on the tax cut on a 231 to 200 vote, with seven Democrats joining the Republicans in favor and one Republican – Representative Jim Leach (R-IA) – voting against. At the more civilized hour of 9:30 am, the Senate passed the report on a vote of 50 to 50, with the Vice President called in to break the tie in favor. Senators Lincoln Chafee (R-RI), John McCain (R-AZ) and Olympia Snowe (R-ME) joined most of the Democrats in voting against the measure; Senators Zell Miller (D-GA) and Ben Nelson (D-NE) joined Republicans in voting in favor.

The elements of the final bill relating to dividends and capital gains closely mirror the House bill, with tax rates reduced on each, rather than the full dividend exclusion promoted by the President. The structure of the tax breaks in the conference report means there is no effect on the Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC), in contrast to the President's dividend exclusion proposal. Following up on a Sense of the Senate urging protection of the LIHTC bill in the final tax bill, Senator Jack Reed (D-RI), ranking member of the Subcommittee on Housing and Transportation, sent a letter to Senators Charles Grassley (R-IA) and Max Baucus (D-MT), Chair and Ranking Member, respectively, of the Senate Finance Committee, noting the importance of protecting the LIHTC in any tax cut plan emerging from conference. Twenty-five other Senators signed the letter.

While the LIHTC appears safe in the final bill, advocates for housing and other programs serving low income people are concerned about the effects of the tax cuts and reduced revenue on spending for programs over time. While the official

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POINT OF VIEW

by Sheila Crowley, President

Some housing and homeless advocates in Ohio held a press event last week to voice their support for a National Housing Trust Fund and to call on their Congressman to become a co-sponsor and help get it passed. They carefully documented the need for affordable housing production in the district. The local paper wrote a story, the nearest TV outlet did a piece on the 11 pm news, and a radio station interviewed an advocate the next morning. For a small community, the media coverage was extensive. It caught the attention of their Congressman, but not in a way that they expected.

A couple of days after the press coverage, Hope House, the local transitional housing program whose director had orchestrated the event, got some unusual phone calls. First, someone from the Chamber of Commerce and then someone from the local Board of Elections called Hope House requesting the names of the members of its board of directors. The local United Way, which provides 40% of Hope House's funding, got a similar call asking about Hope House's board.

Then the Hope House director got a call from her Congressman's district office director whose first words were to ask the name of the president of the Hope House board. When pressed as to the reason, it became clear that the Congressman was not happy about the media coverage of their advocacy work on the National Housing Trust Fund. The staffer said that it was obvious that the Hope House board of directors had not endorsed the National

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Capitol Hill *(cont'd from p. 1)*

price tag for the tax bill, according to the Joint Tax Committee, is \$349.67 billion, the final cost is likely to be much higher. The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities reports that all but one provision in the bill will expire by 2008 or earlier, with the Administration and Congressional leaders planning to seek the extension of most of the provisions that would expire. In addition, wealthy elites benefit disproportionately from the tax cut, with an even greater average tax cut under the conference report—\$93,500—for individuals with incomes of more than \$1 million than under the President's proposal. Meanwhile, the literal middle class—people with incomes in the middle-fifth of the income spectrum—would receive a tax cut of \$217.

The bill would reduce the rate on dividends and capital gains to 15% (expires in 2008); accelerate the reductions in the top income-tax brackets; provide a child care tax credit (expires in 2004); expand the number of taxpayers in the 10% bracket (expires in 2004); provide tax breaks for married couples (expires in 2004); and provide other business tax breaks and increase the AMT exemption (expiring in 2004 or 2005). If all of the proposed expirations are extended, the conference package will cost between \$800 billion and \$1 trillion, according to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, not \$350 billion. The legislation would also provide \$20 billion in state aid, but the tax cut legislation will also cause states to lose revenue because of the relationship between state and federal taxation.

Committee Marks Up Downpayment Assistance, HOPE VI Bills

On May 21, the House Financial Services Committee held a mark-up hearing on three housing bills: H.R. 1276, the American Dream Downpayment Act; H.R. 1614, the HOPE VI Program Reauthorization and Small Community Mainstreet Rejuvenation and Housing Act; and H.R. 23, the Tornado Shelters Act.

The American Dream Downpayment Act, introduced by Representative Katherine Harris (R-FL), passed the committee with two amendments. The bill would provide \$200 million in grant funds for low income, first-time homebuyers, distributed through the HOME program. Approximately 40,000 low income families are expected to be assisted with downpayment and closing costs. Ms. Harris described the bill as providing stability to communities and helping to reach the President's goal of creating 5.5 million new low income homeowners over the next decade.

Representative Nydia Velazquez (D-NY) offered an amendment, which passed by voice vote, to determine that all recipients of downpayment assistance are quali-

fied and are able to maintain homeownership. While introducing the amendment, Ms. Velazquez quoted Secretary Mel Martinez as saying, "It is not enough to help a family get housing; we have to make sure they keep the housing." Representative Michael Capuano (D-MA) also offered an amendment that passed by voice vote to make public employees, such as teachers, police officers, and firefighters, eligible for downpayment assistance. Under this amendment, the income of eligible public employees could not exceed 115 % of area median income (150% in high housing cost areas), whereas under the HOME program eligible incomes cannot exceed 80 % of area median income.

Representative Barbara Lee (D-CA) offered an amendment to combat foreclosures that did not pass the committee. The amendment would have made funds available to municipalities to provide loans to low income people who are in default on their mortgages and are in jeopardy of foreclosure. Ms. Lee said she hoped her amendment would assist individuals in minority and low income communities by offering a temporary safety net for those who are unable to make their mortgage payments. The amendment failed 35-25 on a roll call vote on near-party lines.

The HOPE VI Program Reauthorization and Small Community Mainstreet Rejuvenation and Housing Act introduced by Representative James Leach (R-IA) passed the committee with no amendments. The bill, H.R. 1614, would reauthorize the HOPE VI program, and would allow the funds to be used in redevelopment projects in urban areas, as well as in smaller communities to provide affordable housing and to renovate deteriorating Mainstreet and town square areas. Currently, there is no funding proposed for the HOPE VI program in HUD's FY04 budget.

As HOPE VI funds are primarily used to demolish and revitalize distressed public housing units, advocates have expressed concerns about the program's tendency to displace public housing residents. Members of the Committee, including Ranking Member Barney Frank (D-MA), said that H.R. 1614 addresses displacement issues. Representative Mel Watt (D-NC), who introduced legislation in the 107th and 108th Congress that served as the basis for much of H.R. 1614, explained that the bill offered incentives to public housing authorities (PHAs) that do not displace any residents. Mr. Watt also described the bill as giving preference to PHAs that could move quickly in using the money to start development. This language responds to the Administration's complaint that after receiving the money, PHAs were taking too long to begin redevelopment.

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HUD Cooperative Housing Official Named

The National Association of Housing Cooperatives announced on May 21 that HUD has named Allen H. Jones as Senior Advisor and Special Assistant for Cooperative Housing. Although Congress created the position in 1955, it has been vacant for over a decade.

HUDClips

On May 22, under Docket Number FR-4695-I-01, HUD issued an interim rule codifying the requirements of Executive Order 13202. Pursuant to the Executive Order, the interim rule requires that, in awarding construction contracts, agencies remain neutral with respect to contracts with labor organizations. The interim rule is intended to ensure compliance by all HUD grantees, recipients of financial assistance, parties to cooperative agreements, contractors, and subcontractors with the neutrality requirements in the Executive Order. The rule becomes effective on June 23; comments are due by July 21.

Under Notice PIH 2003-12, issued on May 16, HUD clarified for public housing agencies the requirements for determining comparable rents and rent reasonableness in connection with administering Housing Choice Vouchers, among other matters. The notice went into effect upon its publication and expires on May 31, 2004.

HUD issued a final rule on May 16 strengthening the certification and licensing requirements for appraisers to be placed on the Federal Housing Administration's list of approved appraisers. The final rule, issued under Docket Number FR-4620-F-02, will go into effect on June 16.

All notices are available at www.hudclips.org.

Tell Your Friends...

NLIHC membership is the best way to stay informed about affordable housing issues, keep in touch with advocates around the country, and support NLIHC's work. Membership information is available at www.nlihc.org, or by fax, mail, or e-mail. Just e-mail membership@nlihc.org or call 202-662-1530 to request membership materials to distribute at meetings and conferences.

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Update from the Field New York State Legislature Restores Budget Cuts

After months of action and work with state legislators, advocates for preservation programs in New York state celebrated a victory last week when the state legislature restored the cuts to the neighborhood and rural preservation programs that had been proposed by Governor George Pataki (R).

The Neighborhood Preservation Program will now be funded at \$10.43 million, an increase of \$4.97 million above the \$5.46 million proposed by the Governor in the Executive budget last January. (The program is still below its last year's funding level of \$12.56 million.) In addition, the Rural Preservation Program will be funded at \$5.1 million, \$2.78 million more than the Governor's proposed \$2.35 million.

Governor Pataki said he would use his veto power against a budget that he believed was unbalanced and filled with tax increases. While the Governor did veto the budget, the legislature, for only the second time in New York history, overrode his budget vetoes—all 119 of them—and funding of the neighborhood and rural preservation programs was protected.

"The leadership in the state legislature is to be commended for making affordable housing issues a priority and for leading the way to saving the Neighborhood Preservation Program and the Rural Preservation Program," said Joe Agostine, Jr., Executive Director of the Neighborhood Preservation Coalition of New York State.

In addition to adding funds to preservation programs, the legislature also chose not to consider Article 7, which would have directed the Division of Housing and Community Renewal to terminate all current contracts with housing groups and issue a Notice of Funding Availability with new program and funding standards. That language would have cut the neighborhood and rural preservation programs in half, Mr. Agostine said.

"We are extremely thankful to the legislature for once again showing their strong support for these vital and necessary programs," Mr. Agostine added. "The administration's attempt to dismantle a nationally recognized model for the production and preservation of affordable housing in this state was ill-conceived at best."

For more information, contact the Neighborhood Preservation Coalition of New York State at 518-432-6757 or the New York State Rural Housing Coalition at 518-458-8696.

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The Tornado Shelters Act was introduced by Representative Spencer Bachus (R-AL) to allow the use of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds to build tornado-safe shelters in manufactured housing communities, and was approved without amendments. During the markup of H.R. 23, Members expressed support for assisting individuals, especially low income individuals, living in manufactured homes. Mr. Bachus cited statistics showing that one out of six people lives in a manufactured home, and that many of these people are low income. Mr. Bachus said he felt people residing in manufactured homes have a right to live in communities that are safe from the physical harms of tornadoes.

Representative Maxine Waters (D-CA) said she too was concerned about individuals and families in manufactured homes and had worked to include language in the Downpayment Act to allow assistance to be given to low income people who want to purchase a manufactured home. She stated that she would like to work closely with Members representing rural areas to work on legislation that address poverty issues, as poverty exists both urban and rural areas. Mr. Frank agreed, adding that people trying to get manufactured housing are at a financial disadvantage. Mr. Bachus thanked the Members for their comments and said he believed that “people in manufactured housing should be treated with equity when trying to get a home.”

Block Granting of Vouchers Subject of House Hearing

On May 22, HUD Assistant Secretary for Public and Indian Housing Michael Liu appeared before the House Subcommittee on Housing and Community Opportunity to discuss the Administration’s proposal to block grant the voucher program to the states. Representative Bob Ney (R-OH), chair of the subcommittee, noted that reform of the voucher program was a contentious topic and would require sustained debate. He said that he had introduced the block grant legislation, H.R. 1841, at the Administration’s request.

In his opening statement, Mr. Liu told the subcommittee that a block grant would improve how tenant-based assistance is provided, simplify the program, and reduce the misdirection of funds. A block grant would cause a reduction in recaptures and subsidy overpayments, Mr. Liu asserted, while maintaining core elements of the program. He claimed that conversion to a block grant would maximize the number of families receiving assistance without shifting assistance away from families with the most need – a point that was later disputed by members of the subcommittee.

One concern echoed by several subcommittee mem-

bers was whether states would be tempted to redirect voucher block grant funds to other uses, given the fiscal crises most states are facing currently. Representative Maxine Waters (D-CA), ranking member of the subcommittee, pointed out that her state would find the block grant funds extremely tempting in the midst of a \$30 billion budget deficit. Mr. Ney cited an improper use of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families funds in Ohio for another purpose as an example. Representative Patrick Tiberi (R-OH), who has been quoted in newspapers stating his opposition to the block grant, also expressed concern that states would “grab” the funds for other uses. In response to this concern and Mr. Tiberi’s skepticism whether states would have the capacity to administer the block grant, Mr. Liu said that HUD would actively monitor the state administration.

Ms. Waters and Representative Mel Watt (D-NC) challenged Mr. Liu on the claim of increased efficiencies that could result from the block grant. With prodding from Ms. Waters, Mr. Liu said that HUD would not get rid of any of the staff currently administering the voucher program for HUD. Mr. Watt asked for information about the cost and the number of staff now required to run the program for HUD and seemed doubtful that the program would become any more efficient under state administration. Representative Nydia Velazquez (D-NY) registered her worry that the block grant would not increase sufficiently over time to keep up with housing costs and need.

Distribution of vouchers was another source of concern for members of the subcommittee. The effects of state politics could allow for geographic discrimination in the distribution of vouchers, according to Representative Artur Davis (D-AL), with either rural or urban areas treated unfairly, depending on the dynamic in a particular state. While Mr. Liu said that HUD would be developing a formula that should allay such concerns, Mr. Davis worried that HUD’s attention to the matter of intrastate distribution would be limited. The possibility of states being permitted to serve fewer of the lowest income people was another concern for Mr. Davis. The weakened targeting is necessary, according to Mr. Liu, to allow the voucher program to reach seniors and those on TANF. Acknowledging the importance of serving seniors, Mr. Davis questioned singling out the most vulnerable for cuts in assistance.

Mr. Watt and Representative Bernie Sanders (I-VT) pushed Mr. Liu on the federal role in addressing the affordable housing challenges facing the country. Mr. Watt noted that the voucher program reflects a national objective to provide safe, affordable housing and that a federal agency should be responsible for

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fulfilling a national objective. In response, Mr. Liu asserted that there are other programs reflecting national objectives managed by states.

Mr. Sanders took issue with Mr. Liu's unwillingness to admit that housing problems in the nation had reached the level of a crisis and challenged the meager increases in the numbers of vouchers in recent years. Calling Mr. Liu's boast that the voucher program had increased by \$2 billion between FY00 and FY03 "dis- ingenuous," Mr. Sanders noted that the funding of the voucher program had increased to reflect higher costs, not increased numbers of families served.

At the beginning of the hearing, Mr. Ney reported that the subcommittee intended to hear from a variety of groups and individuals interested in the voucher program. Ms. Waters closed the hearing by telling Mr. Liu that the block grant proposal was scaring people and seemed the first step in dismantling HUD. She said she and her colleagues were prepared for a "friendly fight" against the proposal, because a change of such magnitude would hurt people who rely on vouchers.

Senator Reed Recommends Focus on Production, Preservation

Senator Jack Reed (D-RI), Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on Housing and Transportation, addressed the American Bar Association's Forum on Housing and Community Development Law on May 23 in Washington. Citing the housing crisis the nation faces, Senator Reed pointed to production, preservation and funding as key policy issues. The Senator said he is drafting a bill that would authorize increased production financed from a variety of sources. He urged the audience to "keep up the drumbeat on production" and to let their elected officials know about the housing crisis and the need for Congressional action.

Expressing relief that the tax cut legislation would not affect the Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC), he relayed that he had pushed for a Sense of the Senate amendment on the issue to the Senate's tax cut bill and had sent a letter with colleagues to the conferees on the tax cut legislation urging them to protect the LIHTC. Additional funding was needed to address lead and other health hazards in homes, he noted, because current funding levels were a drop in the bucket compared to the costs involved. Senator Reed said he is planning to introduce legislation to reauthorize federal programs serving homeless people. The Senator closed by saying that, while "some think good, decent housing is the American dream, I think it should be the American reality."

New Legislation

On May 20, Representative Robert Andrews (D-NJ) introduced H.R. 2159. This bill would amend the Public Health Service Act to allow participation of the public in the decision-making process for determining the location of group homes established under the program of block grants for the treatment of substance abuse. The bill was referred to the House Committee on Energy and Commerce.

Representative Danny Davis (D-IL) introduced H.R. 2166 on May 20 and the bill was referred to the House Committee on Ways and Means. The bill would amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for a temporary ex-offender low income housing credit to encourage the provision of housing, job training, and other essential services to ex-offenders through a structured living environment designed to assist the ex-offenders in becoming self-sufficient.

On May 21, Representative Paul Kanjorski (D-PA) introduced H.R. 2189. The bill would amend the Solid Waste Disposal Act to assist homeowners with properties contaminated by leaking underground storage tanks in moving from such properties on a temporary or permanent basis by authorizing the Secretary of HUD to guarantee loans to such homeowners. The bill was referred to the House Committees on Financial Services and Energy and Commerce.

S. 1119 would amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to clarify the eligibility of certain expenses for the Low Income Housing Tax Credit. This bill was introduced by Senator Bob Graham (D-FL) on May 22 and was referred to the Committee on Finance.

Bills At A Glance

Information on legislation being tracked by NLIHC is available through NLIHC's new legislative action center, at <http://capwiz.com/nlihc/issues/bills/>, or at www.nlihc.org.

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Resources

Concentration of Poverty

Last week, the Brookings Institution's Center on Urban and Metropolitan Policy was set to release a new report by Paul A. Jargowsky on the concentration of poverty in the United States based on recently released 2000 Census data. A similar report, using similar data, was also being prepared by G. Thomas Kingsley and Kathryn L.S. Pettit at the Urban Institute as part of their National Neighborhood Indicators Partnership. Meanwhile, as part of the annual "Housing in the Nation's Capital Report," the Fannie Mae Foundation had conducted a similar analysis focused specifically on Washington, D.C. On Monday, May 19, all three reports were released jointly at the Brookings Institution.

Mr. Jargowsky's report, *Stunning Progress, Hidden Problems: The Dramatic Decline of Concentrated Poverty in the 1990s*, builds on earlier research done for his book *Poverty and Place: Ghettos, Barrios, and the American City* (1997). There, he found that between 1980 and 1990 the spatial concentration of the poor in the United States rose significantly. As the title suggests, the major finding of this most recent research is that that trend reversed itself in the following decade. Over this period, the number of people living in neighborhoods (census tracts) where the poverty rate was 40% or higher declined by 2.5 million people, a 24% decline. More striking, the number of poor persons living in such tracts declined 27% from 4.8 million to 3.5 million and the number of high poverty census tracts declined from 3,417 in 1990 to 2,510 nationwide. The "hidden problems" referred to in the report title primarily have to do with the lack of improvement seen in the suburbs over this period. While the incidence of poverty and its concentration remain lower in the suburbs than in central cities, for the first time the suburbs were home to more neighborhoods of concentrated poverty than rural areas (non-metropolitan census tracts). The Urban Institute's *Concentrated Poverty: A Change in Course* reports similar overall declines. In both these reports, Washington is cited as one of the few places where the concentration of poverty actually increased significantly over the decade. This finding is backed up by Fannie Mae's report, *The Poorest Become Poorer: A Report on Patterns of Concentrated Neighborhood Poverty in Washington, D.C.*

Since the three reports are based on the same data, it is not surprising that their general findings are essentially the same; namely, that in most cities the concentration of poverty declined in the 1990s. There are, however, a number of important differences in the methods and conclusions of these reports. Where Mr. Jargowsky uses the straight census data without correcting for changes in census tract boundaries, the Urban Institute uses data from its Neighborhood

Change Database, which uses consistent census tract boundaries. While this does not change the findings significantly, taken together this may serve to answer those who question the findings based on the deficiencies of either approach. Also, where Mr. Jargowsky looks exclusively at neighborhoods where 40% or more of the residents are classified as poor, and the overall percentage of the area poor that live within them, the Urban Institute report looks at neighborhoods across the poverty spectrum and uses a wider set of neighborhood indicators. Therefore, Mr. Kingsley and Ms. Pettit find that not only did the number of tracts with 30% or more of their populations in poverty decline, but that there was a "compensating increase" in the neighborhoods with 10-30% poverty rates. There was little change in the number of neighborhoods with less than 10% poverty rates. Also these authors find that while the education, employment, and social indicators generally improved, improvements across all census tracts meant that the gaps in achievement between high and low poverty neighborhoods remained, and even grew in some areas such as education. Thus, while Mr. Jargowsky states that "poor neighborhoods, or at least the residents of high-poverty neighborhoods in 1990, benefited disproportionately from the boom [in the economy in the 1990s]," the authors of the Urban Institute appear less likely to agree. Certainly that was not the experience in Washington, D.C.

These reports are generally more descriptive than explanatory. They highlight some interesting developments in the data, but also pose intriguing questions: What is the cause of the de-concentration of poverty observed in the census? Many in the housing community will look to programs such as HOPE VI and the increasing reliance on housing vouchers as two possible causes. Another possibility, discussed at some length at the presentation, is the effect of changes in federal and state welfare policies ushered in by Clinton-era welfare reform. Another question is, so what? Implicit in this research is the assumption that dispersing poverty is a good thing. It is important to remember that even if the concentration of poverty went down and the poverty rate in the United States declined, the total number of people in poverty still increased over this period. Further, the observed improvements are measured from 1990, when the U.S. economy was in a recession, to 2001, when the economic boom and bubble of the 1990s had yet to burst. It is not yet clear whether these trends will continue or whether these changes will improve the opportunities and lives of those in poverty. These are important questions, and all three sets of researchers said they were on their agenda.

View the reports at: <http://www.brookings.edu/es/urban/urban.htm>; www.urban.org; or www.fanniemaefoundation.org.

Point of View *(cont'd from p. 1)*

Housing Trust Fund or even knew what it was about. The Hope House director replied that indeed the board had carefully examined both the Senate and House bills from the 107th Congress and had voted to endorse the National Housing Trust Fund in June 2002. The staffer then told her that the Congressman had a "good relationship" with and had "not had any trouble" with the local housing authority, which has not endorsed the National Housing Trust Fund.

Hope House has been in this community since 1990. In addition to operating transitional housing for homeless women and their children, they provide housing counseling to more than 1,500 people a year at risk of homelessness to prevent more families from needing shelter. Recognizing that providing services was necessary, but insufficient, Hope House made advocacy a core element of their mission. The Hope House director organized the local housing coalition in 1996 that includes a cross section of public and nonprofit agencies, as well as businesses, to work on housing problems in the community. She is active in statewide housing and homeless advocacy. She sees the National Housing Trust Fund as something that would help Hope House clients, and therefore working to get it enacted is a logical extension of their role as a service provider. She is stunned that her Congressman could question her right to speak out on this or any other issue.

"I don't know what else to call it but intimidation," reports the Hope House director. "Advocacy takes time, energy, and guts," and she is worried that others might be silenced, afraid to speak out. If the Congressman's intent was to have a chilling effect on advocacy by nonprofit agencies in his district, he failed with Hope House. The Hope House board and director are incensed over the heavy-handed tactics of the Congressman's staff. The board chair is determining under what circumstances, if any, a Member of Congress can direct a local Board of Elections to do anything, let alone investigate a private, nonprofit organization. He picked the wrong people to pick on.



About NLIHC: Established in 1974, the National Low Income Housing Coalition is dedicated solely to ending America's affordable housing crisis. NLIHC educates, organizes, and advocates to ensure decent, affordable housing within healthy neighborhoods for everyone. NLIHC provides up-to-date information, formulates policy, and educates the public on housing needs and the strategies for solutions.

News & Events

Fair Housing Accessibility FIRST

A HUD-sponsored initiative called Fair Housing Accessibility FIRST (Fair Housing Instruction, Resources, Support, and Technical guidance) provides training on accessibility requirements. A day of free training will be held Thursday, June 5, from 8:30 am to 4 pm in Boston. The day will begin with an overview of the Fair Housing Act Accessibility requirements, and will also include sessions on accessible routes, and strategies for compliant bathrooms and kitchens. Register by May 30 at www.fairhousingfirst.org.

National Fair Housing Conference

The National Fair Housing Alliance will hold its 15th annual conference in Washington from June 28 through July 1. The conference will include sessions on all aspects of fair housing, including public-private initiatives, fair housing enforcement, predatory lending, education and outreach, mapping for fair housing, and design. Early bird registration runs through June 2. Call 202-898-1661 or visit www.nationalfairhousing.org for details.

Fact of the Week

Racial and Ethnic Composition of High Poverty U.S. Neighborhoods, 1990-2000

	<u>1990</u>	<u>2000</u>
Asian:	2%	4%
Black:	47%	39%
Hispanic:	22%	29%
White:	26%	24%
Other:	3%	4%

Source: Center on Urban and Metropolitan Policy, *Stunning Progress, Hidden Problem: The Dramatic Decline of Concentrated Poverty in the 1990s*, May 2003.

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