

MEMO OF MEMBERS

The Weekly Newsletter of the National Low Income Housing Coalition

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SPECIAL REPORT

FY04 VOUCHER FUNDING CRISIS – WEEK 13

Connection between Funding Vouchers and Ending Homelessness Raised at Hearing

Members of Congress were forced to focus on the Section 8 crisis this week when the Subcommittee on Housing and Community Opportunity held a hearing on the Administration's proposed Samaritan Initiative (H.R. 4057, introduced by Representative Renzi; see related article in *Memo*), which would provide permanent housing plus services for individuals experiencing long-term homelessness.

Witness after witness, including Nan Roman, President of the National Alliance to End Homelessness, and Barbara Poppe, Executive Director of the Community Shelter Board in Columbus, OH, emphasized the important role Section 8 plays in ending homelessness. Witnesses testified that the Administration's current and proposed cuts to the program in 2004 and 2005 are causing uncertainty across the country that is hurting efforts to end homelessness. Several committee members also expressed concern over the Administration's voucher cuts and the negative impact of the cuts on efforts to end homelessness. "The Samaritan Initiative cannot be divorced from the broader issue of affordable housing," Ranking Member Maxine Waters (D-CA) said.

At the hearing, Subcommittee members received a report compiled by the National Low Income Housing Coalition and the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP) listing the effects that HUD's FY04 voucher cuts have had on housing agencies and the families they serve. The report catalogs the ways that several hundred agencies are coping with the April 22 HUD notice, and includes examples of agencies that are freezing turnover vouchers, withdrawing vouchers from families that are searching for housing, and terminating vouchers, among other actions.

The data were also released by CBPP in a media call on Thursday, July 15. The report is available at www.cbpp.org/7-15-04hous.htm.

IL Terminations Planned; Advocates Continue Efforts. On June 30, the Housing Authority of Elgin, IL, sent letters to roughly 60 voucher holders indicating that their assistance and leases will be terminated effective July 31. The letter states that the terminations are necessary because of a reduction in funds from Congress and HUD. Elgin tenants are contacting their Representative, House Speaker

(See Vouchers on p. 2)

Save the Date! NLIHC Annual Conference

NLIHC's 2005 Annual Housing Policy Conference and Lobby Day will be held Monday and Tuesday, May 2 and 3, at the Capital Hilton in Washington, DC. The Leadership Reception will be held the evening of May 3. Mark your calendar and plan to join us!

Remember NLIHC During the Combined Federal Campaign

Please keep NLIHC in mind during the 2004 Combined Federal Campaign, which will begin soon. Our CFC number is 0828.

POINT OF VIEW

by Sheila Crowley, President

Anyone following the presidential campaign this summer is hearing a lot about values. The major candidates are talking about their values that they believe are shared by most Americans. This is progress in the values debate. At least we have moved from a period when the far right laid claim to having values, with the implication that the rest of us did not.

But like other buzzwords used in political discourse, the term values has become so loaded that it is in danger of losing meaning altogether. That is problematic, because values are serious stuff that matter a lot in how we conduct our lives as individuals and how we organize ourselves as a society. So what are values?

The first thing that is important to remember about values is that although they are highly emotionally charged in order to motivate behavior, the term "values" standing alone is neither good or bad. The definition I use when talking about values with social work students is that they are "relatively persistent preferences that guide our decisions about means and ends." Liberty and equality are values that have strongly influenced the American experience, but so are racism and patriarchy. We acquire values in our upbringing, forming and reforming them as we gain knowledge and experience. Values are deeply held, but can change, although not easily or quickly. We are not condemned to carry negative values we

(See Point of View on p.8)



**NATIONAL LOW INCOME
HOUSING COALITION**

Capitol Hill

VA-HUD Bill to Move

The VA-HUD appropriations bill, a large and often contentious one, seems even more contentious than usual (if not quite as large). The House intends to act on its bill in appropriations subcommittee and full committee the week of July 19, but details about the bill's contents are all but impossible to glean. NLIHC will keep members posted as information becomes available.

The Senate has taken no action on its FY05 HUD bill and it will not until after the August recess. *Congressional Quarterly* reported on July 14 that the Senate may, prior to August recess, act on a "mini-omnibus" bill comprised of appropriations bills already passed by the House (thus bypassing the Senate Appropriations Committee in order to get full Senate action as quickly as possible). This scenario would not include larger, more complex bills like the VA-HUD bill. *CQ* again raised the possibility that the Senate may not take up its VA-HUD bill until after the November elections.

House Passes Rural Housing Service Spending

The FY05 Agriculture spending bill (H.R. 4766) passed the full House on July 14, in the same version that had earlier passed the Appropriations Committee (see *Memo*, June 25).

The bill provides \$116.1 million for Section 515, \$592 million for rental assistance, a total of \$66 million in loans and grants for very low income housing repairs, \$42 million for Section 514 farm labor housing, and a total of \$4.1 billion for single family direct and guaranteed loan funding. The bill also provides \$10 million for housing preservation grants and \$34 million for self-help technical assistance grants. The Rural Community Development Initiative receives \$6.2 million in H.R. 4766. While most programs were funded at or near FY04 levels, the Section 515 program and Section 502 direct low and very low income single-family loans would see cuts under the House bill, while the Guaranteed Section 502 loans would see an increase. Details are at www.ruralhome.org/pubs/hacnews/2004/0625.htm.

No action has taken place yet on a Senate Agriculture spending bill.

Samaritan Initiative Gets Hearing

A June 13 hearing on the Samaritan Initiative, proposed in President Bush's FY05 HUD budget and introduced as H.R. 4057 by Representative Rick Renzi (R-AZ), ad-

(See **Capitol Hill** on p. 2)

Vouchers *(cont'd from p. 1)*

Dennis Hastert (R-IL), in hopes that funding can be found to stop these terminations.

Advocates from around the country continue to organize and advocate to solve the voucher funding crisis. The New York State Association of Renewal and Housing Officials and 30 New York agencies have written to the New York Congressional delegation requesting the immediate pull back of the FY04 renewal funding notice and opposing the Administration's voucher proposal in the FY05 budget. "We want to make certain that you are aware of the world in which we are living as it relates to federal funding of housing programs that support our individual communities and the lives of so many people who live in our communities—your communities," the organizations wrote.

July 15 Deadline Passes. Finally, July 15 was the deadline for housing authorities to appeal for a revised annual adjustment factor for FY04 voucher renewals. (see *Memo*, July 2). HUD has until August 31 to respond to these appeals, and it is expected that additional funding will be released over the next six weeks.

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. Information is available at www.nlihc.org.

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dressed a variety of homelessness issues as well as the need for new affordable housing production and the importance of Section 8 vouchers (see related article in *Memo*). The Samaritan bill would authorize \$50 million to HUD and \$10 million to each the Departments of Veterans Affairs and Health and Human Services to be distributed for housing and services grants to meet some of the permanent supportive housing needs of people experiencing long-term homelessness (“chronically homeless”). The hearing was conducted by the House Financial Services Subcommittee on Housing and Community Opportunity.

One piece of the bill attempts to define “chronically homeless person,” a venture some hearing witnesses took issue with. According to the legislation, a chronically homeless person is an “unaccompanied disabled individual” who has been homeless for more than one year or who has had four or more periods of homelessness in over three years. Catholic Charities USA, Lutheran Services in America and Volunteers of America noted that the bill’s definition “categorically excludes families with children, even families with disabled members who have suffered from repeated or extended periods of homelessness.”

NLIHC also addressed the definition in the written testimony it submitted. “There is considerable disagreement among professionals and practitioners about the concept of chronic homelessness, the definition that HUD is currently using, the practicality of classifying real people in need of housing using the criteria articulated in the bill, and the basic ethics of categorizing homeless people in this manner. Congress should not put into statute a definition that is so widely disputed,” NLIHC stated.

Representative Artur Davis (D-AL) polled the hearing’s first panel of eight witnesses; he found none wedded to the bill’s definition of a “chronically homeless person.” Mr. Renzi stated he is open to amending the definition. Interagency Council on Homelessness (ICH) Executive Director Philip Mangano defended the definition, describing its origin in research, data and ICH discussion. Mr. Mangano noted that to the extent that there are concerns that go beyond the bill’s definition, the Administration is addressing these issues in other ways.

Again and again, witnesses and Housing and Community Opportunity Subcommittee members noted their support for a National Housing Trust Fund. Representative Bernie Sanders (I-VT), author of the House’s trust fund bill H.R. 1102, said that the Samaritan Initia-

tive should be supported, “but let us not delude ourselves . . . \$70 million is not a real solution. . . . There is a serious solution; there are 213 cosponsors to a National Housing Trust Fund, and more than 5,000 organizations have endorsed it.” Subcommittee Ranking Member Maxine Waters (D-CA) and Representatives David Scott (D-GA) and Davis also spoke in favor of a trust fund, as did a number of witnesses.

In related news, the House passed its FY05 Labor-HHS spending bill June 14. No funds were appropriated for the unauthorized Samaritan Initiative.

Hearing Held on HUD’s Choice for CFO

The Senate Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committee held a July 15 hearing to confirm the appointment of Carin M. Barth as Chief Financial Officer to HUD. Ms. Barth is currently president of LB Capital Inc. of Houston, which she co-founded in 1988. She also serves on the board of directors for Southwest Bank of Texas.

During her testimony, Ms. Barth said she believes that a combination of her love of public service and her proficiency in finance and management in the private sector have prepared her to serve as HUD CFO. “Based on my private and public service experience, I believe that I am qualified for the position of CFO for [HUD],” Ms. Barth said in her testimony. “I have experiencing preparing, justifying and monitoring budgets and strategic plans. I have helped establish, maintain and review financial systems. I have managed assets and credit management functions. I have helped develop strong internal control programs and assisted in the production of audited financial statements. I have helped develop uniform financial management policies and procedures. And I have processed accounting transactions and payments.”

The CFO is responsible for implementing policies that govern all aspects of departmental financial management, and oversees the design, implementation and coordination of HUD’s financial information and general management systems. Responsibilities also include systems integration, development of the annual financial statements, accounting operations and the implementation of the department’s management control program.

If confirmed, Ms. Barth will replace Angela Antonelli, who left the position last year. It is unclear when the Committee will vote on Ms. Barth’s confirmation.

(See Capitol Hill on p. 4)

Capitol Hill *(cont'd from p. 3)*

Sweat Equity Bill Goes to President

The Helping Hands for Homeownership Act of 2004, which passed the House on June 21 (see *Memo*, July 2), passed the Senate July 16 and is on its way to the President for his signature. The legislation amends the Housing Opportunity Program Extension Act of 1996 to permit a homeowner under the sweat equity model program to perform required construction work on more than one dwelling. As the bill had previously been worded, sweat-equity program participants could count towards their commitment only hours worked on their own homes.

The bill also amends the Housing Act of 1949 to designate the Section 502 single-family housing loan program of the Rural Housing Service as the Doug Bereuter Single Family Housing Loan Guarantee Program. Representative Bereuter (R-NE) is leaving the House after this session to become President of the Asia Foundation.

Bills At a Glance

Current information on legislation being tracked by NLIHC is available through NLIHC's legislative action center, at <http://capwiz.com/nlihc/issues/bills/>.

HUD

Comments Sent on GSEs' Affordable Housing Goals

NLIHC joined with several other organizations, including the Consumer Federation of America and the National Community Reinvestment Coalition, to comment on HUD's proposed housing goals for the Government Sponsored Enterprises (GSEs), Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac (see *Memo*, July 6).

The joint comments make clear the organizations' strong interest in promoting effective policies to expand affordable housing, including home purchase and rental housing. The comments note that while the GSEs have done much, they are in a strong position to expand their role in these areas. Recognizing that both Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac regularly meet their annual housing goals, the organizations note it is reasonable to expect GSE mortgage purchases to not only match but to lead the primary lender market. "The GSEs have both the responsibility and the capabilities to lead the affordable housing market," the organizations write. "Setting stretch goals would encourage them to perform consistently up to this standard."

The comments urge that the affordable housing goals be more deeply targeted to the neediest segments of the mortgage market, and recommend that goals be made consistent with the income targeting guidelines that lenders must follow under the Community Reinvestment Act. The comments also encourage that GSEs be required to expand their presence in minority markets to help provide more affordable housing opportunities and reduce a concentration of subprime mortgages in minority areas.

Another area of the comments supports the continuation of a multifamily subgoal under the Special Affordable Housing Goal, and proposes increasing the current multifamily requirements from 1% of the dollar amount of GSE purchases—an amount the GSEs regularly exceeded—to 2.5%. The comments also suggest that establishing multifamily subgoals within each of the three goals (Special Affordable Housing Goal; Underserved Areas Goal; and Low and Moderate Income Goal) would be a more direct means for targeting GSE activity to this important market segment.

The organizations also encourage re-instituting bonus points for GSEs, which they would receive for focusing on certain market segments. The bonus points, which lapsed in 2003, could help boost the GSEs' efforts on Section 8 preservation projects and mortgage purchases on Tribal lands.

The comment period ended July 16. HUD is currently reviewing the comments before issuing the final housing goals, which will go into effect January 1, 2005.

In other GSE news, a June 13 hearing was held in the House Financial Services Subcommittees on Capital Markets and Oversight on the Office of Federal Housing Enterprise Office's oversight of the Federal Housing Finance Board.

Proposed FMRs Still not Released; Deadline Two Weeks Away

With the proposed 2005 Fair Market Rents (FMRs) still to be released, the time period HUD has to respond to public comments is ticking away. With final FMRs due October 1, HUD has historically released the proposed FMRs in May, allowing plenty of time for the required 60 days of public comment and any response or adjustments that result from that process. August 2nd appears to be the last day the proposed FMRs could be released while "complying" with the required 60-day comment period, but advocates hope the numbers are released before then.

Update from the Field

PA Tenant Leader Honored

On July 10, during a conference attended by 75 federally subsidized tenants from across metropolitan Pittsburgh, George Moses became the first recipient of an award honoring a tenant leader who has made a difference for fellow tenants and the community. Further, the award, which will be presented annually, bears his name: the George Moses Award for Excellence in Tenant Commitment. The conference at which Mr. Moses received the award was sponsored by the Housing Alliance of Pennsylvania and the Southwestern Pennsylvania Association of HUD Tenants (SPAHT).

A member of the boards of the Housing Alliance and NLIHC, Mr. Moses has been instrumental in mobilizing tenants and developing tenant leaders in the Pittsburgh region. Mr. Moses was a founding member of the Resident Education and Action Project in the late 1990s, a tenant organizing effort that became SPAHT in 2001. Ronell Guy of the Housing Alliance said that Mr. Moses has been a “trailblazer” in the Pittsburgh area tenants’ movement. “None of us would be here without George. He has driven the effort,” Ms. Guy said.

The award was presented to Mr. Moses by a former VISTA volunteer he had trained, Roland Russell. In presenting the award, Mr. Russell said that Mr. Moses continues to be a mentor to him to this day. In subsequent comments about the award, Mr. Moses said, “I was shocked and thrilled. It was a great honor, but it’s really a team award that goes to all of the folks who worked on this effort.” Mr. Moses expressed his gratitude to the Housing Alliance, to NLIHC, and to the National Alliance of HUD Tenants for helping him gain the tools he has used in his organizing work.

Mr. Moses continues to be involved in SPAHT’s activities, and he was active in outreach to tenants in the Pittsburgh area to encourage them to come to the conference. The conference was unique for the Pittsburgh area because it brought together public housing, voucher and project-based tenants for the first time. Organizers of the conference noted that all three programs face insufficient support from the federal government. In addition, tenants in all three programs live in the same types of communities and face similar challenges in their housing situations. SPAHT plans to build on the momentum generated by the conference by holding a forum as part of each its monthly meetings that will serve to educate and mobilize SPAHT members and other tenants.

In other Housing Alliance news, long-time advocate Craig Stevens will be leaving the organization on July 15. Mr. Stevens worked for the Housing Alliance for

(Continued next column)

USDA

Davis Named New RHS Administrator

Russell T. Davis was named the new Administrator for the Rural Housing Service (RHS) in a July 12 announcement by Department of Agriculture Secretary Anne Veneman. RHS provides assistance to disadvantaged rural communities, and oversees housing programs including the Section 515 program.

Mr. Davis currently serves as senior policy advisor in the Office of Sallie Mae Oversight of the Department of the Treasury. His career in public finance began in 1983 while working for a private bond firm in New York. During the Bush I Administration, Mr. Davis served as the Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary for Housing Operations at HUD.

“Russell Davis brings extensive knowledge and experience in the financial services industry to the USDA as administrator of Rural Development housing problems,” Ms. Veneman said in a press release. “His combined tenure in the private and public sector will provide strong leadership to address America’s rural housing needs.”

National Housing Trust Fund

Another Senator Joins S. 1411

The recent addition of Senator Charles E. Schumer (D-NY) brings the number of cosponsors for S.1411, the Senate version of the National Housing Trust Fund Act, to 21. Thanks to the National Student Campaign Against Hunger and Homelessness and advocates in New York for their efforts. For full list of cosponsors and more information on the campaign, visit www.nhtf.org.

Correction: It was Vermont advocates who encouraged Senator Patrick Leahy (D-VT) to cosponsor S. 1411, not Massachusetts advocates, as reported last week.

(Continued from previous column)

eight years in its Pittsburgh office. Under his leadership, tenants in more than 50 federally subsidized properties in western Pennsylvania received education and organizing information and assistance. Mr. Stevens was also very active and effective in federal advocacy on behalf of the Housing Alliance, focusing in particular on the preservation of federally subsidized housing. “Craig will be missed by Housing Alliance staff and by advocates at the regional, state and national levels,” Ms. Guy said.

For more information: Ronell Guy, Housing Alliance of Pennsylvania, 412-441-3080, rguy@housingalliancepa.org.

Housing in the Elections Groups will Register Homeless and Low Income Voters on July 22

Enthusiasm surrounding the first National Low Income and Homeless Voter Registration Day, set for Thursday, July 22, continues to grow. Twenty-three organizations in 17 states have planned events to register homeless and low income voters. These events range from hosting large block parties to setting up lemonade stands at which registration forms are also given out.

At each event, organizers will ask newly registered voters to ‘vote’ on a mock ballot, which will ask three questions: Did you vote in the last presidential election? Will you vote in this presidential election? What issue is most important to you? The ballots are designed to help registrants become more comfortable with the idea of voting and to help organizers collect information from the registrants.

A list of all events planned for the day is at www.nlihc.org/vrem. For more information, or to plan an event locally, contact Katie Fisher at 202-662-1530 x222 or katie@nlihc.org.

Helping Homeless Persons Vote

Laws have been enacted that facilitate voting by people experiencing homelessness—most significantly the Help America Vote Act of 2002 (HAVA) and the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 (Motor Voter). However, because of a lack of education among registrars, advocates, and service providers, homeless people still face many barriers. On June 30, the National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty held a training session to help advocates navigate the laws that affect the voting rights of homeless people. The session explained the most common barriers faced by homeless voters, and described what advocates and policymakers could do to reduce them.

The barriers and steps that advocates can take to overcome them include:

The “traditional dwellings requirement.” Requiring a person to have a home in order to vote has been ruled unconstitutional, and nontraditional dwellings such as homeless shelters and park benches or intersections are now allowed to be used as an address on voter registration forms. However, many people still believe traditional dwellings are required in order to register to vote. This fallacy can be overcome through public education campaigns.

Mailing address requirements. A mailing address is required to be given at the time of voting so that voters may receive Board of Elections mail. For homeless voters, a post office box, homeless shelter, or government office may be used as a mailing address. To assist homeless voters who cannot afford post office boxes, some advocates are encouraging their local post offices to provide general delivery or fee-free post office boxes.

Mobility laws. Many homeless people are forced to move frequently. However, most states have durational residency requirements that make it difficult for homeless citizens to vote. Advocates hoping to change these laws must lobby their state legislatures.

Personal identification requirements. HAVA imposed new ID requirements, and states can choose to enact more stringent laws. Under HAVA, voters need a driver’s license, government-issued ID or social security number to register by mail. If they do not have any of these, the state will issue them a voting ID number. A government document or piece of mail is also sufficient identification, but homeless voters may not possess any of these identification materials. Further, any person who registers by mail will need to present an ID at the polls. In some states with more stringent laws, a photo- or government-issued ID is required. Any changes to state-level requirements would also require legislative action.

Provisional ballots are a key tool in the fight to ensure that homeless persons are able to vote. Under HAVA, any voter who cannot prove his eligibility at the polling station is permitted to vote using a provisional ballot, and if he or she is later found to be eligible, the vote will be counted. The Law Center recommends civil enforcement of HAVA, particularly provisional ballots, by the U.S. Attorney General.

In addition to using legal tools, the Law Center suggests that local advocates conduct public education campaigns in order to inform more homeless people of their rights. These campaigns would also serve to inform homeless service providers and other residents of the community, as well as poll workers who may be unaware of the newer laws that affect homeless voters. The Law Center also suggests that homeless service providers and advocates accompany homeless voters to their polling places in order to make sure that the laws are followed.

More information is available at www.nlchp.org.

Resources

Movements in U.S. Income Distribution

The U.S. Census Bureau has released "Dynamics of Economic Well-Being: Movements in the U.S. Income Distribution, 1996-1999," a look at how the income of individual households changed in relation to the overall U.S. income distribution over the course of the study period.

The report constructed income quintiles for the study years using income from the Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP). This dataset allows one to look at the same household over time and tie it to demographic characteristics to see what characteristics may help explain the movement in income. This contrasts with the Current Population Survey (CPS), which provides more data on the overall income distribution, but does not follow individual households over time.

Of the five income quintiles, the top and bottom quintiles were the most stable: 66% of households in the top income quintile in 1996 remained in the top quintile in 1999, while 62% of households in the bottom quintile in 1996 remained there in 1999. The middle three quintiles saw more movement, with 41% to 47% of households remaining in the same quintile in 1999 as in 1996. Additionally, 13% of all U.S. households had large enough income changes that to move up or down two or more quintiles between 1996 and 1999.

The report also looked at the demographics of these households, finding that households with lower education levels were more likely to move down in income in comparison with more-educated households. Households moving into a higher income quintile were more likely to be younger, while older households were more likely than younger households to move into a lower quintile. Marriage status also played a noticeable role on household income, with widowed householders more likely to stay in the same quintile or move down than non-widowed householders. There were some race effects – with Black households more likely to stay in the lowest income quintile than Hispanics, and more likely to move down from the second-lowest quintile than non-Hispanic whites.

The study also contains an index of detailed appendix tables for those wanting to look at further breakdowns of the data. While the report timeline is limited to the 1996-1999 period, it still provides an interesting backdrop highlighting the fluidity in household income in this country. The report can be downloaded from the U.S. Census website at www.census.gov/prod/2004pubs/p70-95.pdf

Children and Housing Assistance

The Children's Defense Fund (CDF) has released a new report titled "The Bush Administration Set to Exacerbate the Growing Housing Crisis for Families with Children," which shows that 3.6 million children live in low-income families who pay more than half of their income for rent or live in severely substandard housing. One-third of Americans with such worst-case housing needs are children. The report also illustrates that families with children make up 40% of the U.S. homeless population.

Children make up a disproportionate share of families who live in overcrowded or unsafe housing, the report finds. While 37% of all renter and homeowner households contain children, they are present in 93% of overcrowded households and 56% of households with multiple housing problems such as crowding, inadequate plumbing and heating systems, or health hazards.

CDF reports that the Administration's FY05 budget proposal would slash funding for the Section 8 program, leaving it underfunded by \$1.6 billion. Such cuts would also fall heavily on children. CDF closes the report by calling on Congress and the Bush Administration to fully fund the Section 8 voucher program, noting that as wages fail to keep up with rising housing and health care costs, housing assistance is evermore critical to low income families.

The report can be found at CDF's Web site at www.childrensdefense.org/familyincome/housing/housing_crisis.pdf.

Fact of the Week

Changes in U.S. Incomes

Change in Household Income Relative to National Household Income Distribution (in Quintiles), 1996 to 1999

	Same Quintile	Moved to higher quintile	Moved to lower quintile
Bottom Quintile	62.0%	38.0%	NA
Second Quintile	46.9%	34.2%	18.9%
Third Quintile	41.0%	32.4%	26.7%
Fourth Quintile	44.6%	22.9%	32.4%
Top Quintile	66.2%	NA	33.8%

Source: "Dynamics of Economic Well-Being: Movements in the U.S. Income Distribution, 1996-1999." U.S. Census Bureau, July 2004. www.census.gov/prod/2004pubs/p70-95.pdf.

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

learn as children throughout our lives. We have a responsibility to evaluate what it is that we believe and how our beliefs guide our actions, and change if we determine that we are causing harm.

The tricky thing about values is that different people can espouse the same value, but assign it different meanings. You know what patriotism means to you, but do you really know what it means to your neighbor? For some patriotism means defending one's country no matter what. For others, patriotism means holding our leaders responsible for making decisions that are in the best interest of our country and in the best interest of the rest of the world.

So when people who are trying to convince us to vote them into office talk about values, we have to demand that they tell us what their values are and what they mean. It is not enough to say "traditional values" or "American values" or "conservative values" or "progressive values." Tell what values you consider to be traditional or American. It is not enough to say you believe in "freedom" or "fairness." These are words, not actions. Tell us how freedom or fairness will guide your decisions about means and ends.

NLIHC Staff

NLIHC Seeks Policy Analyst

NLIHC seeks staff member to track, analyze, and advocate on federal legislative and regulatory issues related to NLIHC mission. Reports to Deputy Director. Qualifications include highly developed communication and policy analysis skills, knowledge of federal housing policy, and commitment to housing justice. Direct experience with the legislative process a plus. Masters' preferred. Send cover letter and resume to Deputy Director, NLIHC, 1012 14th St. NW, Suite 610, Washington, DC 20005. Applications accepted until position is filled. EE0/AA.

NLIHC Seeks Interns

NLIHC is seeking legislative, outreach and research interns for the fall semester who are passionate about social justice issues and who have excellent writing and interpersonal skills. Send a resume and cover letter to:

Internship Coordinator, NLIHC
1012 14th Street NW, Suite 610, Washington DC 20005
or to info@nlihc.org. Questions? Call 202-662-1530 x228.



National Low Income Housing Coalition
Memo to Members
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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.