



MEMO MEMBERS

The Weekly Newsletter of the National Low Income Housing Coalition

OUT OF REACH

Out of Reach 2010 Released; National Housing Wage Is \$18.44

NLIHC released the findings of its annual research report, *Out of Reach*, on April 21. The report shows the gap between what households need to earn to afford a modest two-bedroom apartment and what they actually earn, both nationally and for jurisdictions across the country.

The often-cited national two-bedroom Housing Wage is now at \$18.44, up from \$17.84 last year. The national Housing Wage is the hourly wage one must earn in order to afford the average two-bedroom Fair Market Rent (FMR) of \$959, assuming that one has full-time, year-round employment and that no more than 30% of household income goes towards housing and utility costs.

Out of Reach 2010 shows that despite a deep recession, rents continue to rise. At the same time, the average wages renters earn are actually decreasing. The estimated average renter wage in the United States is only \$14.44, a full \$4 below the national Housing Wage and down from \$14.69 last year.

Furthermore, even though the federal minimum wage increased from \$6.55 to \$7.25 in the summer of 2009, a minimum wage worker would still need to work 102 hours a week in order to afford the two-bedroom FMR. There is no county or metropolitan area in the United States in which a household earning the minimum wage can afford the FMR for even a one-bedroom apartment.

The findings of this year's research were reviewed by NLIHC Research Analyst Megan DeCrappeo and Research Director Danilo Pelletiere in a press conference on April 21. Also speaking at the press conference was Dean Baker, co-director of the Center for Economic and Policy Research, who highlighted troubling national trends on employment and wages, noting that the situation is not likely to improve any time soon. He pointed to the slow growth rate in the job market and stagnating wages as indicators that the current difficulties facing low wage households are likely to continue for the next few years.

Mr. Baker and NLIHC President Sheila Crowley each discussed the need for housing policies that address the longstanding shortage of affordable housing. Both stressed the need for more balanced housing policies, instead of the current situation in which the vast majority of housing subsidies and tax credits go

to high-income homeowners rather than low income renters. Ms. Crowley also urged Congress to capitalize the National Housing Trust Fund, in order to provide communities with funds to build homes for people with the lowest incomes.

"Clearly, the time to act is now. We must take steps to provide safe, decent, and affordable homes for the lowest income families across the country," Ms. Crowley said. "Providing \$1 billion for the National Housing Trust Fund will help address the growing shortage of affordable housing, which is one of the most serious economic problems facing the country."

In addition to providing national data, the report compares the cost of rental housing with household incomes, each state's minimum wage, and average renter wages for each state, metropolitan area, and county in the country. The introduction to *Out of Reach 2010* connects the new local data to the current recession, provides state-level findings, and provides several tables showing rankings among states and regions.

A number of NLIHC's state partners also held media events in conjunction with the release of the report.

Out of Reach 2010 can be found at: <http://www.nlihc.org/oor/oor2010/>

NATIONAL HOUSING TRUST FUND

National Letter Attracts Growing Number of Signatories

Two weeks after the National Housing Trust Fund campaign issued a call for national, state, and local organizations to sign a letter to Congress calling for immediate funding for the NHTF, over a thousand organizations have responded. In addition to representing all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico, there are signatories from 335 of the 435 Congressional districts as of the close of business on April 23. The goal is 100% coverage of all Congressional districts.

National organizations as diverse as the National Council of La Raza, the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), and the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (NAHRO) have circulated the sign-on request to their networks.

More signatures will be collected this week.

The letter reads:

We, the undersigned organizations, urge Congress to act soon to provide the initial funding for the National Housing Trust Fund (NHTF). We are requesting \$1.065 billion be provided immediately to the NHTF: \$1 billion to capitalize the NHTF and \$65 million for project-based vouchers to couple with NHTF capital grants.

The NHTF was created in the Housing and Economic Recovery Act of 2008 (HERA) to address the severe shortage of rental homes that are affordable for the lowest income families, but it has not yet been funded. The President proposed funding for the NHTF in his FY10 and FY11 budget requests.

In the United States today, there are only 37 rental homes available and affordable for every 100 households with incomes below 30% of their area median. A scarcity of housing that the poorest families can afford is the principle cause of homelessness in the United States.

Investment in the NHTF will create good jobs. Every \$1 billion provided to the Trust Fund will support the immediate construction of 10,000 rental homes, creating 15,100 new construction jobs and 3,800 new jobs in ongoing operations.

We urge Congress to provide this badly needed funding at the soonest possible opportunity.

Signatories can be local, state, and national organizations, including nonprofits, congregations, labor unions, corporations, and government agencies. To add your organization, go to www.nlihc.org and click the 'Take Action' on the left side of the home page.

CAPITOL HILL

Senate Passes Budget Resolution

The Senate Committee on the Budget held a markup of its FY11 budget resolution on April 21 and 22. The resolution passed by a vote of 12-10 and now goes to the full Senate.

A budget resolution sets an overall spending framework for Congress to follow, and approving a resolution is the first step in the FY11 appropriations process. In most years, both the House and Senate pass resolutions and agree to an overall spending limit. Then, appropriators begin crafting the detailed departmental spending priorities within the budget framework.

Committee Chairman Kent Conrad's (D-ND) budget resolution would freeze domestic non-security discretionary spending for three years, just as the President's proposed FY11 budget would

do (see Memo, 2/5). The Senate resolution would provide \$4 billion less in security funding than the President's budget.

In the summary of his budget mark, Chairman Conrad indicated that he "supports the Administration's plans to preserve and increase the supply of affordable housing." The budget resolution offers a statement of priorities that calls for fully funding both tenant-based and project-based Section 8 at the President's requested levels.

In contrast to the President's budget, which proposes deep cuts to the Section 202 housing for the elderly and Section 811 housing for people with disabilities programs, the Committee calls for increasing funding for these programs. In addition, the Senate resolution would provide funding to the Native American Housing Block Grant above the level requested by the President's budget.

The resolution also includes language that would create a reserve fund for the National Housing Trust Fund and other housing investments, similar to the language included in last year's budget resolution.

Congress has a statutory deadline of April 15 by which to pass a concurrent budget resolution. If resolutions are not passed by that date, the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations are free to start the appropriations process and craft a budget based upon the prior year's resolution. However, because out-year figures will not reflect current funding concerns, the Appropriations Committees may choose to wait past the April 15 deadline for the Budget Committees to complete their work and for Congress to pass a FY11 budget resolution. The House Committee on the Budget has not yet announced plans to move forward with a budget resolution.

In other budget news, the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies has begun the process of holding hearings on the FY11 budget proposal. On April 21, the Subcommittee held a hearing on the FY11 budget and the Federal Housing Administration (FHA). The President's budget and the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimates for the FY11 proposal differ by nearly \$4 billion on the amount of funding that will be generated by FHA receipts. In his opening statement at the hearing, Chairman John Olver (D-MA) asked the sole witness, FHA Commissioner David Stevens, to address this discrepancy. Commissioner Stevens testified that FHA "remain[s] confident that the \$5.8 billion in receipts forecast in the President's budget will be realized," indicating that policy changes at FHA not fully taken into account in CBO's estimates will produce the \$4 billion in savings.

View materials related to the Senate budget resolution, including the summary of the Chairman's mark and the the Chairman's

statement on the budget resolution, at: <http://budget.senate.gov/democratic/>

View Commissioner Stevens's testimony at: http://appropriations.house.gov/Witness_testimony/TH/David_Stevens.4.21.10.pdf

Public Housing Bills Expected, Hearing Scheduled

The House Financial Services Subcommittee on Housing and Community Opportunity will hold an April 28 hearing on two public housing bills, the Public Housing One-for-One Replacement and Tenant Protection Act of 2010 and the Public Housing Preservation and Rehabilitation Act of 2010. The bills are expected to be introduced shortly by Subcommittee Chairwoman Maxine Waters (D-CA) and Committee Chairman Barney Frank (D-MA), respectively.

The One-for-One Replacement and Tenant Protection Act would address the significant loss of public housing and public housing tenant displacement resulting from the demolition and disposition, or sale, of public housing, and from the mandatory and voluntary conversion of public housing to tenant-based vouchers. In 2008, HUD told Congress it had approved the demolition or disposition of more than 99,000 public housing units since 2000, and that applications for the demolition or disposition of another 16,672 units were pending at that time.

In 2008, Mr. Frank and Ms. Waters, citing their concerns that more than 60% of the public housing units lost through demolition and disposition were not replaced by units affordable to public housing tenants, called on the Bush Administration's HUD to stop approving demolition and disposition applications. HUD did not comply with this request. Mr. Frank and Ms. Waters made a similar request to the Obama Administration's HUD, again to no avail but with a somewhat more sympathetic response. HUD Secretary Shaun Donovan, in responding to their call for a moratorium, told Mr. Frank and Ms. Waters that HUD would more closely review demolition and disposition decisions through "the lens of the number, location, and affordability of such units."

Chairwoman Waters' bill would require the one-for-one replacement of all public housing units lost through demolition, disposition, and mandatory or voluntary conversion to vouchers. The bill would require that at least one-third of replacement units be built on site, and that residents have a right to return to a replacement unit. In addition, tenants would have to be involved in the decisions about whether a housing agency applies for demolition/disposition permission from HUD, be given significantly more information about their relocation rights during redevelopment, and be asked whether they would

like to return to the redeveloped on-site property.

NLIHC, the National Housing Law Project's Housing Justice Network, and the National Training and Information Center have joined together since 2008 to call for reforms such as those proposed by Ms. Waters in order to protect tenants and the nation's investment in public housing.

Chairman Frank's forthcoming bill, the Public Housing Preservation and Rehabilitation Act, would provide tools to allow public housing agencies to leverage private financial assistance. These tools would include a federal loan guarantee for the rehabilitation of public housing units, which would be secured by and repaid by the PHA's future capital grants. The bill would also repeal the existing prohibition against development of new public housing units, and authorize grants for the conversion of public housing projects to assisted living facilities.

The hearing, titled "Legislative Proposals to Preserve Public Housing" will be held at 10 am on April 28 in room 2128 of the Rayburn House office building. Leonard Williams, a Resident Commissioner of the Buffalo, NY, Housing Authority and a member of the NLIHC board of directors, will testify representing NLIHC.

GREEN Act Passes Committee

The House Committee on Financial Services reported out H.R. 2336, the GREEN Act (Green Resources for Energy Efficient Neighborhoods), on April 22. The bill would provide incentives to make housing financed by HUD and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) more energy efficient (see Memo, 5/15/09).

In particular, the bill would establish a four-year, 50,000-unit demonstration program to highlight the cost-effectiveness of funding energy-efficiency improvements in HUD and USDA multifamily housing. The bill would also encourage the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) to insure at least 50,000 energy efficient mortgages by December 31, 2012, and would amend Freddie Mac's and Fannie Mae's housing goals to provide additional credit for energy efficient and location efficient mortgages.

H.R. 2336 is similar to legislation that passed the House in 2009 as part of climate legislation. NLIHC supports this legislation.

House Hearing Addresses Barriers to Housing for Native American Veterans with Disabilities

The House Financial Services Subcommittee on Housing and Community Opportunity held a hearing titled "Addressing the

Housing Needs of Native American Veterans with Disabilities” in Window Rock, AZ, on April 10. The Congressional district in which Window Rock is located has the country’s highest concentration of Native American households.

Thirteen panelists were invited to testify on H.R. 3553, the Indian Veterans Housing Opportunity Act of 2009. The bill, introduced by Representative Ann Kirkpatrick (D-AZ), would exclude veteran and survivor benefits from the calculation of income eligibility for Native American housing assistance. Under the Native American Housing Assistance and Self Determination Act (NAHASDA), disabled Native American households receiving veteran and survivor benefits are currently required to count these benefits toward income when calculating NAHASDA assistance (see Memo, 4/9).

HUD Senior Advisor Fred Karnas testified that HUD is interested in providing “decent, safe and sanitary housing to Americans who have risked their lives to preserve our freedoms” and discussed specific programs and initiatives the department has taken to assist veterans. Mr. Karnas said that HUD was still reviewing the bill but that HUD would work with Congress on legislation that “promotes housing opportunities for Native Americans.”

Officers of the Navajo Nation and the White Mountain Apache Tribe, the National American Indian Housing Council, the Navajo Housing Authority, and representatives of veterans organizations provided testimony describing the housing challenges faced by disabled Native American veterans, insufficient HUD funding for Native American housing programs, and the positive impact that H.R. 3553 would have.

The House passed H.R. 3553 on April 20 by a voice vote.

View H.R. 3553 at: http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=111_cong_bills&docid=f:h3553ih.txt.pdf

HAC Authorization Bill Introduced; Sign- on Letter Circulating

Representative Ruben Hinojosa (D-TX) introduced a bill on April 22 to authorize increased federal funding for the Housing Assistance Council (HAC). HAC has in the past received federal funds to accomplish its mission of improving housing conditions for the rural poor, with an emphasis on the poorest of the poor in the most rural places.

The bill would authorize \$10 million for HAC for FY12, and \$15 million each year from FY13 through FY17. HAC’s current authorization level is \$10 million. HAC received \$5 million in the FY10 HUD appropriations bill.

The bill, H.R. 5122, was referred to the House Committee on

Financial Services. Senators Patrick Leahy (D-VT) and Olympia Snowe (R-ME) are circulating a Dear Colleague letter asking for \$10 million for HAC in FY11. Advocates should ask their Senators to sign on to this letter, which has a deadline of April 26.

Link to the letter at <http://www.nlihc.org/doc/HAC-Dear-Colleague-Letter.pdf>

HUD

HUD Proposes New Definitions for Homeless, Homeless Person

HUD released a proposed rule on April 19 that would revise the definition of homeless, homeless individual, and homeless person for the department’s Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) programs. The HEARTH Act, which was signed into law in May 2009 and amends the McKinney-Vento Act, requires HUD to develop regulations for newly authorized homeless assistance programs (see Memo, 5/8/09). These definitions are the first of HEARTH-related regulations to be released.

The HEARTH act established six definitions for the terms ‘homeless,’ ‘homeless individual,’ and ‘homeless person.’ This proposed rule would consolidate these definitions.

Under the proposed rule, ‘homeless,’ ‘homeless individual,’ and ‘homeless person’ would be defined as:

- an individual or family who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence;
- an individual or family who will imminently lose their primary nighttime residence;
- unaccompanied youth and homeless families with children... who do not otherwise qualify as homeless; or
- an individual or family fleeing or attempting to flee, domestic violence and other situations of violence.

A separate definition for a “homeless individual with a disability” is provided in the rule.

In addition to restructuring the definitions, the proposed rule would provide details on verifying homeless status. For households who “lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence” and who are exiting institutions, the rule would require that the household have been homeless immediately prior to entering facility. This change ensures that only households homeless prior to institutionalization, not those who lose housing during treatment, meet the definition of homeless. The definition also allows the household to have temporarily

resided at the institution for up to 90 days, rather than a prior standard of 30 days. The extension of this time period will allow additional households, those that need longer periods of care, to still qualify as homeless upon discharge.

For individuals or families who will “imminently lose their primary nighttime residence” the proposed rule would require that a service provider retain evidence that a household will lose their housing, including an eviction order, a documented oral statement from the household, or verification by a property owner or renter that the household must vacate a property. HUD stresses that the requirements of a service provider are meant to fully meet the statutory requirements while not placing excess burden of documentation and coordination of paperwork upon a household attempting to establish the qualifications of homelessness. The proposed rule provides an allowance for “due diligence” on the part of a service provider in obtaining verification that may be unavailable.

Criteria for “unaccompanied youth and homeless families with children” relate to the time period of homelessness as well as barriers to employment. The proposed rule would establish two timeframes, defining a “long-term period” of living without housing on one’s own as 91 days or more, and a “persistent instability” as a 90-day period in which one has moved three or more times. The proposed rule also details evidence for multiple barriers to employment. HUD is seeking specific feedback on these three criteria for the definition of youth and homeless families.

For the fourth category, “individuals or families fleeing... domestic violence,” HUD would require only self-certification or certification by an intake worker of a victim’s circumstances. HUD is seeking comments on whether or not to develop a standardized certification form for this purpose.

Lastly, the definition for “individual with a disability” is expanded in the rule to include individuals with HIV/AIDS.

This proposed rule applies only to the newly authorized Emergency Solutions Grant. However, HUD intends to use the same definitions for the Continuum of Care and the Rural Housing Stability programs.

There is a 60-day comment period for the proposed rule that ends on June 21.

To view the rule, visit: <http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2010/pdf/2010-8835.pdf>

To submit comments on the rule to HUD, visit: <http://www.regulations.gov>

HUD and Treasury Seek Input on the Future of the Housing Finance System

On April 22, the U.S. Department of the Treasury and HUD formally published a notice seeking comments on how a more stable and sound housing finance system can be established. This notice was announced by Secretary Shaun Donovan on April 14 at a House Committee on Financial Services hearing on the housing finance system (see Memo, 4/16).

Specifically, respondents are asked to weigh in on the seven questions Treasury and HUD released in advance of the April 14 hearing. The questions provide an opportunity for advocates to comment on the government’s role in financing multifamily housing, and the proper balance between government support for homeownership and rental housing.

Comments are due July 21. A copy of the notice can be found at <http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2010/pdf/2010-9309.pdf>.

NSP Guidance on Impact of New Definitions for ‘Foreclosed’ and ‘Abandoned’

In an effort to increase use of Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) funds, HUD recently published two notices changing the definitions of ‘foreclosed’ and ‘abandoned’ for both NSP1 and NSP2 (see Memo, 4/9). On April 21, additional guidance was posted on HUD’s NSP-HELP web page.

The new definition of ‘foreclosed’ allows NSP grantees to use short sale procedures to buy property directly from an owner. A ‘short sale’ means a lender agrees to accept the proceeds of a property sale even if the amount recovered is less than what the borrower owes on a mortgage. In such cases, the guidance warns grantees that they are responsible for ensuring that NSP’s tenant protection requirements are met. Under NSP, tenants must be provided with 90 days’ notice prior to eviction, and tenants with must be allowed to occupy the property until the end of the lease term, except the lease can be terminated on 90 days’ notice if the unit is sold to a purchaser who will occupy the property.

The earlier notices stated that NSP grantees could apply the new definitions retroactively to the date of the Substantial Amendment and Action Plan to their Consolidated Plan, which enabled them to be grantees, generally before December 1, 2008. The guidance clarifies that any acquisition, redevelopment, or disposition already undertaken must have met all NSP requirements at the time of purchase, such as conducting environmental reviews, addressing lead-based paint, and securing appraisals. This means, for example, that grantees

that acquired a property using a short sale in 2009 may now use NSP funds to reimburse themselves. It could also mean that vacant residential properties grantees bought that were not foreclosed or abandoned may now count toward the 25% very low income set aside.

The statute creating NSP¹, the Housing and Economic Recovery Act of 2008, requires properties to be purchased at a discount from their current market appraised value and generally meet appraisal values of the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act (URA). The new guidance makes clear that if a property meets both a definition of ‘foreclosed’ as well as ‘abandoned,’ HUD considers it ‘foreclosed,’ and both the discount and appraisal requirements are triggered. On the other hand, properties exclusively ‘abandoned’ or vacant are not subject to the appraisal and discount requirements. For example, the new definitions classify a home on which the owner is more than 90 days delinquent on tax payments to be either foreclosed or abandoned. HUD clarifies that because appraisal and discount requirements are more rigorous for ‘foreclosed’ properties, that standard applies.

Several other URA-related issues are also discussed in the guidance document, which is at: <http://hudnsphelp.info/media/resources/ImpactOfNewDefinitions.pdf>.

HUD Considers Introduction of Small Area Fair Market Rents

Under reforms being considered at HUD, Fair Market Rents (FMRs) may, beginning in 2012, be changed so that they are set at the Zip Code level in metropolitan areas, and updated annually using data from the American Community Survey. Public housing agencies may have the opportunity to pilot the new policy in 2011.

FMRs are the rent limits used in the Housing Choice Voucher program. One of the most frequent criticisms of the program is that the FMRs in urban and suburban areas are set for broad metropolitan areas. Under the current system, FMRs typically fall just below the middle of the combined rent distribution for a very large number of different local markets. As a result, many higher-rent communities are all but off limits for voucher holders. This restricts the ability of the program to deconcentrate poverty and limits the opportunity of residents to move closer employment, transit, and other amenities, except where PHAs have made the effort to establish HUD-approved exception payment standard areas. Moreover, there is a significant potential for the program to pay too much in lower rent communities. Not only does this require an unwieldy “rent reasonableness” regime to control rents, but there are concerns

that this policy is inflating rents for unsubsidized tenants in some communities.

In an interim rule (65 FR 58870) that was published in 2000, HUD sought to increase the opportunities in metropolitan areas where voucher holders were concentrated in a few high poverty areas by increasing the FMR for the entire area. This policy has not been ideal, however, and has only increased the potential to over-subsidize in high poverty markets. HUD is now seeking to replace this rule with a more targeted policy.

The likely reforms were described by Kurt Usowski, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Economic Affairs in the Office of Policy Development & Research at HUD, at NLIHC’s annual policy conference. Mr. Usowski said the department intends to use the small area data in the 2000 Census to establish “rent ratios” between the current metropolitan area FMRs and the rent levels in local areas within metropolitan areas. (HUD intends to eventually use the small area data from the American Community Survey, sometime after the data are released in 2010.) By multiplying these ratios by the metropolitan area FMRs, arrived at using current methods, small area FMRs can be generated. The approach also means HUD will continue to generate FMRs for entire metro areas, which are currently used in many programs beyond the Housing Choice Voucher program.

HUD will continue to use state minimums and to generate county-based FMRs in rural areas. HUD plans to target the new FMRs by Zip Codes because of their broad familiarity to program users and landlords and because Zip Codes generally contain sufficient numbers of renter households to generate valid ratios.

The proposed reform bears significant similarities to reforms NLIHC proposed in response to HUD’s call for comments in its release of the proposed FY10 FMRs (see Memo, 7/31/09). Mr. Usowski said that if the reform moves forward it would be described in a notice released “ASAP.” FY10-equivalent hypothetical small area FMRs would be posted on Huduser.org when the notice announcing the demonstration is published. The hypothetical small area FMRs would be updated to FY11 equivalents when the proposed FY11 FMRs are published this summer. HUD would then publish a Federal Register notice requesting demonstration program applicants after considering comments received in response to the demonstration program announcement notice.

Communities could voluntarily pilot the program as early as FY11. If the demonstration proved successful, the reforms would be phased in more generally in subsequent years.

HUD Seeking Input on Research Agenda

The Office of Policy Development and Research (PD&R) at HUD is seeking suggestions for research to be funded in FY11 or in the coming years.

A new page on [Huduser.org](http://huduser.org), the website that PD&R uses to distribute its research, provides links to current research and to HUD's strategic plan, which lays out the department's goals that PD&R's research is intended to serve. HUD then asks for public suggestions in one or more of 12 'primary categories' of research: fair housing, housing finance, HUD effectiveness, project-based assistance, sustainable communities, tenant-based assistance, homelessness, housing tenure, international, special needs, technology, and urban vitality. There is also a category for general comments.

There is currently no deadline for comments. The website can be found at: http://www.huduser.org/portal/research/research_agenda_2011.html#ra

DISASTER RECOVERY

House Holds Hearing on Flood Insurance Reform Legislation; Markup Scheduled

The House Committee on Financial Services Subcommittee on Housing and Community Opportunity held a hearing on April 21 on proposed changes to and reauthorization of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). The hearing examined two bills affecting flood insurance and the future of both disaster recovery and mitigation efforts.

The first bill, the Flood Insurance Reform Priorities Act of 2010, was introduced by Subcommittee Chairwoman Maxine Waters (D-CA) and includes an extension of the NFIP through September 2015. The second bill, the Multiple Peril Insurance Act of 2009, H.R. 1264, was introduced by Representative Gene Taylor (D-MS) in March 2009 and would modify the NFIP to allow policies to cover against loss for both flood and wind damage.

These bills, along with the Homeowners' Defense Act of 2009, H.R. 2555 (see Memo, 3/12), are expected to be marked up by the Financial Services Committee on April 27.

On April 15, the President signed into law the Continuing Extension Act of 2010, H.R. 4851, which includes a short-term extension of the NFIP until May 31.

Archived footage and testimony from the hearing are available at: http://www.house.gov/apps/list/hearing/financialsvcs_dem/hrh_041410.shtml.

FROM THE FIELD

Greensboro Housing Coalition Focuses Advocacy Work around Sustainable Communities

North Carolina's Greensboro Housing Coalition (GHC), an NLIHC member, has been working with local advocates to promote sustainable communities that integrate housing, transportation, and environmental initiatives. Sustainability was a theme of GHC's 10th annual housing summit, held in February, and is a focus of GHC's advocacy on the City of Greensboro's five-year Consolidated Plan (ConPlan).

At the summit, GHC engaged with more than 300 housing and environmental advocates, landlords, tenants, and public health officials to identify solutions that could create safe, affordable, and fair housing by 2014. Discussions focused on affordable housing opportunities; homelessness prevention; healthy and energy-efficient homes; transportation choices; safe, inclusive, and diverse neighborhoods; and local economic development.

In a keynote address, HUD Director for Office of Sustainable Housing and Communities Shelly Poticha discussed federal sustainability issues that include providing families with more affordable housing and transportation choices near employment, and promoting safe, livable, and healthy communities.

"It is important to us to get people to see the environmental and health issues associated with a lack of affordable, safe housing, and to get the housing piece into the environmental dialogue," said GHC Executive Director Beth McKee-Huger. "The summit was a way to inspire people to build partnerships and bring those concerned together and connect housing to their issues."

The discussions at the summit reflect growing community recognition of the opportunities for reduced utility bills, job creation, and housing repairs through energy efficiency, especially when participants heard that 97% of the homes in Greensboro are not energy efficient. The dialogue provided a fitting context for the Earth Day announcement that the City of Greensboro was approved for a \$5 million Retrofit Ramp-up grant from Department of Energy. The project, "Energy Efficiency as a Pathway to Community Health and Wealth Program," will expand the city's capacity to integrate energy efficiency retrofits with home improvements and create jobs in an economically distressed area of east Greensboro.

GHC's focus on sustainability will carry through to its advocacy on the City of Greensboro's ConPlan. Elements of sustainability that GHC wants to see highlighted in the ConPlan include: providing access to mortgages and rents that fit a family's budget; making neighborhoods safe and inclusive; reducing energy costs so that utilities are low and affordable; and offering

better transportation choices to help people get from home to work, school, and shopping destinations.

To make sure that sustainability concerns are reflected in the city's the final ConPlan, GHC will continue talks with city officials and will reach out to other constituents, including faith-based organizations.

For more information: Beth McKee-Huger, Greensboro Housing Coalition Executive Director, beth@greensborohousingcoalition.com

RESOURCES

NLIHC 2010 Advocates' Guide Online, Available for Order

NLIHC's 2010 Advocates' Guide to Housing and Community Development is now online and available for purchase in book form. The Guide contains updated chapters on 70 housing and housing-related programs and issues, from the National Housing Trust Fund and the Housing Choice Voucher program to the mortgage interest deduction and the Federal Housing Administration. Each chapter provides a program history and description as well as information on what advocates need to know now about current program issues. As applicable, advocates are also provided with information on what to say to legislators and with tips for making the program work well at the local level. In addition, the Guide's appendices provide information on Congress, the Administration, and the policymaking process that is designed to help advocates weigh in on housing programs and issues.

New articles for 2010 include an overview of housing need and tips for accessing NLIHC resources as well as chapters on the Homeless Prevention and Rapid-Rehousing program, intergenerational housing, and service coordinators in multifamily housing. In addition, articles directly related to NLIHC's policy agenda are marked for identification.

Articles are written both by NLIHC staff and by staff of our partner organizations. The Advocates' Guide is printed with the support of PNC.

The Advocates' Guide can be accessed at <http://www.nlihc.org/doc/2010-ADVOCATES-GUIDE.pdf>. Copies of the book are available for purchase, for \$40 for non-members and \$25 for members. Bulk rates are available for advocates wishing to distribute copies more broadly; email khara@nlihc.org for details.

NLIHC Preservation Guide Now Available

NLIHC has published The Preservation Guide, Federal Housing and Homeless Plans: Potential Tools in the Affordable Housing Preservation Toolbox to help residents and advocates of affordable housing issues learn how to work locally to help save federally assisted and public housing units that would otherwise be demolished or converted to market-rate housing. The first part of the Guide provides the information needed to participate in a community's required federal planning processes, to ensure that these local plans address the need to preserve federally subsidized and public housing. The second part of the Guide describes how to create and maintain a preservation database that can help track federally assisted housing in a community on an ongoing basis.

The three required plans discussed in part one of the Guide are the Consolidated Plan, the Public Housing Agency Plan, and the Qualified Allocation Plan (for Low Income Housing Tax Credits). The Guide also refers to the Continuum of Care Plan and Ten-Year Plan to End Homelessness, which are completed by many communities. The Guide presents a sketch of these five plans, their required content, and the processes for creating the three plans mandated by law. The Guide also suggests where federally assisted affordable housing preservation language can be inserted in the plans, as well as when during the planning processes such language can be inserted and jurisdictions' actions monitored.

The second part of the Guide spells out, step-by-step, how to create and maintain a database of subsidized multifamily rental housing that integrates all publicly available data into an easy-to-use preservation catalog, or preservation database. A preservation catalog is an essential tool for understanding which properties are available to low income households in a community, where they are located, and what factors threaten the affordability of each project. Creating and maintaining such a catalog is important for preserving assisted housing in a community, and supplements the planning process.

The Preservation Guide, Federal Housing and Homeless Plans: Potential Tools in the Affordable Housing Preservation Toolbox is available at <http://www.nlihc.org/doc/Preservation-Guide2010.pdf>. A copy will be mailed to all NLIHC members shortly.

NEWS & EVENTS

Webinar on New HUD NOFA for Disability Vouchers

The Technical Assistance Collaborative (TAC) will host a webinar designed to assist public housing agencies (PHAs) and partner service organizations in applying to HUD for new housing choice vouchers for non-elderly people with disabilities.

On April 7, HUD released a Notice of Fund Availability (NOFA) announcing funding for new vouchers for non-elderly people with disabilities, including 4,300 vouchers for non-elderly disabled households on a PHA waiting list, and 1,000 vouchers to enable non-elderly households with disabilities to transition from nursing homes and other health care institutions into the community.

The webinar will be on April 28 from noon to 2 pm ET. To join the webinar, register online at www.tacinc.org/register/reg_HUD_NOFAwebinar.html.

NLIHC NEWS

NLIHC Seeks Summer 2010 Interns

Resumes are being accepted for the following positions for Summer 2010 interns:

Communications Intern. Works with the Communications Director and staff. Intern assists the Communications team with the planning of press events and media awards, the preparation and distribution of press materials, maintenance of the media list and tracking press hits, website updates and other duties as assigned. Excellent writing skills required.

All interns will contribute articles to our weekly newsletter, Memo to Members, and other duties as assigned.

The National Low Income Housing Coalition is the foremost national advocacy organization for low income housing. Interns are highly valued and fully integrated into the staff work of the Coalition. We seek students passionate about social justice issues, with excellent writing and interpersonal skills. A small internship stipend is available. In your cover letter, please specify which position/s you would prefer and that you are interested in a Summer 2010 internship. Interested students should send a resume and cover letter to:

Internship Coordinator

National Low Income Housing Coalition

727 15th Street NW, 6th Floor

Washington DC 20005

or via email to linda@nlihc.org, via fax at 202/393-1973.

Please call 202-662-1530 x 228 with any questions.

FACT OF THE WEEK

Metro Areas with the Fastest Growth in Fair Market Rents, 2000-2010

Percent Change in the Two-Bedroom Housing Fair Market Rent*, 2000–2010: Top Ten Metro Areas

	Metropolitan Areas' Percent Change, 2000 – 2010
Honolulu, HI MSA	5.6%
New Orleans-Metairie-Kenner, LA MSA	80.2%
Midland, TX MSA	79.5%
Los Angeles- Long Beach, CA HMFA	76.8%
Odessa, TX MSA	75.7%
Brockton, MA HMFA	75.7%
Danbury, CT HMFA	75.6%
Riverside-San Bernardino-Ontario, CA MSA	75.3%
Lowell, MA HMFA	71.3%
Fitchburg-Leominster, MA HMFA	70.4%

*For comparison purposes, this calculation is based on 2000 FMRs calculated using today's methods, not the actual published FY00 FMRs.

Source: DeCrappeo, M., Pelletiere, D., Crowley, S., & Teater, E. *Out of Reach 2010*. Washington, DC: National Low Income Housing Coalition

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ABOUT NLIHC

The National Low Income Housing Coalition is dedicated solely to achieving equitable federal policy that assures affordable, accessible, and healthy homes for the people with the lowest incomes in the United States.

Established in 1974 by Cushing N. Dolbeare, NLIHC educates, organizes, and advocates to ensure decent, affordable housing within healthy neighborhoods for everyone.

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.

NLIHC membership information is available at www.nlihc.org/join. You can also e-mail us at outreach@nlihc.org or call 202-662-1530 to request membership materials to distribute at meetings and conferences.