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EXCEEDING INDUSTRY STANDARDS FOR OVER 30 YEARS
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The Monitor is published three times each year by the Pennsylvania Association of Housing and Redevelopment Agencies (PAHRA).

Opinions expressed by the authors of articles and within advertisements are not necessarily those of the officers, members and staff of PAHRA.

Original articles on subjects of interest to housing, redevelopment and community development professionals, and their industry affiliates, are always welcome.

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So let’s call this the Message From the President – Part 2. In Part 1, I ended it by leaving everyone with the image above and posing the question “are we making the better decisions to ‘difficult’ questions?”. For the difficult questions, I suggested that an element of resolving those questions should include a fair reading of one’s own self (I called it the “human factor”). You see, a fair “reading” of myself should lead me to conclude that I indeed come with a whole host of biases, predilections, preferences, affinities, opinions of the “world” and of people, etc. So, I am left asking how do the great decision-makers routinely make great, albeit difficult, decisions when they certainly have their share of “colored” or “clouded” opinions about people, places or things (the human factor)? I submit that the skill of great decision-making comes from everything that I stated in Part 1, i.e., the ability to assess the veracity of the information, understand the history or precedence that has been established for the matter (“stare decisis” for the legal eagles), give thought to any policy and ethical considerations, and ultimately draw upon his or her own personal beliefs and experiences (the human factor”). So, how do I put my host of biases, predilections, preferences, affinities, opinions of the “world” and of people, etc. in its proper order when trying to make great but difficult decisions? I would argue that the “great ones” tackle their own “human factor” by understanding the concept of perspective.

You see, the two images at the top of this page are, in fact, the same images. The left square is actually a cube with its face or front directly facing you. However, the cube on the right (which has the same dimensions) is being viewed at an angle. You see, if we fail to look at difficult issues from a variety of perspectives, all that will be seen, understood and/or assessed is that which is directly in front of us. I suggest that the great decision-makers can view any issue or question (like the image above) from multiple angles, and really understand its dimensions, recognize whether there is texture and color, and view the various contours and depth of the other angles before making that difficult decision to a difficult question. They understand the utility in having multiple perspectives. This, I submit, leads to a more sophisticated and stronger decision when faced with very difficult questions.

Yes, sometimes a square is just a square. However, as leaders, we should always ask whether there is more to the picture. As funding continues to dwindle, and as we are continuously being compelled to make more and more extraordinarily difficult decisions that affect our programs, our residents, our organizations, our communities, etc., as leaders, we must get it right. We must employ multiple perspectives to our decision-making process, including the perspective of those that may be greatly impacted by our difficult decisions.

PAHRA training conferences offer excellent professional development opportunities to expand your knowledge base, hone your skill set, and network with colleagues who may be facing those same, or similar, difficult decisions. We encourage you to attend the PAHRA Annual Conference, September 17-20, including the Best Practices Showcase featuring shared successes and innovative ideas. Join us in Lancaster, and let’s learn to view the cube from various perspectives together.

Senghor A. Manns, PAHRA President
HOME

This summer the Hicks family set out on a road trip. Flying to Las Vegas, we then leased a 30-foot RV – our home away from home – for a Grand Circle tour: 3 states and 6 national parks in 8 days. Throughout this crash course in the art of RV living, being in the housing field, I naturally began to wonder if there are those for whom a camper is not just a vehicle in which to enjoy a fun-filled adventure, but rather serves as their permanent residence due to the lack of other suitable housing.

A few clicks later, I learned that there is an entire homeless RV/camper subculture. This does not refer to those who choose to set up a semi-permanent residence in a campground for weekend getaways, but rather to those who scrape together enough cash to purchase a cheap, run-down, tin can RV or camper and park it wherever is most convenient for a few days or weeks. My online searches revealed:

- A number of states including California, Oregon, and Washington have adopted ordinances to establish “safe havens” to contain the growth of homeless RV populations at the request of residents in order to keep their neighborhoods safe and their streets clean.
- These areas are designated specifically for RVs, campers or conversion vans, located near churches or other facilities that can offer the use of bathrooms, or possibly dumping stations.
- Those who park in these designated areas can do so without fear of getting ticketed, having their vehicles impounded, or being required to move the vehicle every day or so.
- Whole communities comprised of this type of homeless RV living are located under bridges and overpasses, in parking lots of abandoned manufacturing facilities or other brownfield areas.
- A quick Google search can provide all types of information regarding full-time RV living, the “rules of the road” so to speak, including where to park and how often to move the RV so that you are not detected by law enforcement, etc.

In Los Angeles, there are at a minimum 28,000 homeless individuals at any given point in time. As a result, the city passed an ordinance making it legal for the homeless who live in cars, vans and RVs to park and sleep on 10% of the city’s streets, mainly in commercial and industrial zones. They have proposed opening civic, church and industrial lots that are linked to sanitation and social services in order to protect their residential neighborhoods from becoming campgrounds.

In Seattle, it is estimated that 1/3 of their homeless live in RVs. Last year the city adopted an ordinance approving two areas to house 100 RVs each. The plan called for the city to provide security, sanitation and trash collection services, as well as case management. As it turned out, the cost was about $1,750 per month per vehicle, which compared to the typical cost for a subsidized apartment. And in spite of good intentions and best efforts, the areas were soon overcrowded, with trashed port-a-potties, overflowing vermin-infested dumpsters and trails of discarded IV needles, similar to the very worst of public housing sites.

For those who can’t afford rent, living in their car or van is often the last rung on their ladder of dignity – but if they can scrape enough cash together to buy an old RV, it’s sort of a step up. After all, a home on wheels is classic Americana, from wagon trains to mobile homes to RVs.

There are online blogs dedicated to those who choose this lifestyle. One of the most interesting is gypsycool.com, which actually gives advice on van or RV living for the homeless. Did you know that in April 2016, HUD actually proposed a law that would make living in an RV, and possibly a tiny house, illegal? HUD’s definition of homeless does not address RV dwellers. However, the McKinney-Vento Act defines homelessness as: an individual or family who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence; and an individual or family with a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for
or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, including a car, park, abandoned building, bus or train station, airport or camping ground; and children living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or campgrounds due to lack of alternative accommodations.

The annual Point-In-Time (PIT) count of homeless persons is federally mandated by HUD for those receiving McKinney-Vento homeless assistance funding. Pennsylvania’s 2016 PIT count totaled 14,941 sheltered and unsheltered individuals over the age of 18 in the eight sub-population categories:

- Chronically homeless individuals
- Chronically homeless families
- Homeless veterans
- Severely mentally ill
- Chronic substance abusers
- Persons with HIV/AIDS
- Victims of domestic violence
- Unaccompanied children under the age of 18

As FY 2017 funding allocations and FY 2018 budget proposals continue to threaten our already insufficient operating funds, capital funds, and our Section 8 HCV funding takes additional blows, not to mention devastating cuts to successful programs and projects using funding that is once again on the chopping block. You, too, can take action today to educate and advocate. Contact your Senators and Representatives. Provide them with examples of real results. Sign on to support letters and petitions. Urge your residents to call or write, and perhaps even provide them with a suggested script.

As your statewide H&CD association, PAHRA joins our national advocacy groups such as NAHRO, PHADA, CLPHA, the National Low-Income Housing Coalition, National Coalition for Human Needs and others to let our government officials know how their actions impact those we serve and our ability to provide much needed infrastructure, housing and related services.

The PAHRA Legislative Committee is coordinating meetings with Congressmen Barletta, Dent, Meehan, Rothfus and Shuster during the August recess, including several site visits to display first-hand the products of successful programs and projects using funding that is once again on the chopping block. You, too, can take action today to educate and advocate. Contact your Senators and Representatives. Provide them with examples of real results. Sign on to support letters and petitions. Urge your residents to call or write, and perhaps even provide them with a suggested script.

As for the Hicks’ “Family Vacation”, it was truly amazing, although not the stuff from which slapstick comedy movies are made. But even though we were in the midst of some of the most scenic wonders of the world, the two days that were spent in 100+ degree heat without the benefit of electric, water or sewage hook-ups and permission to run the generator for only two hours each day courtesy of the National Parks Service, definitely created a new appreciation for the comforts of home that we so often take for granted. In conclusion, let’s take time to be thankful each day for what we have and continue in our efforts to assist those who are less fortunate.
Strong Progress for Rental Assistance Program
Helping People with Disabilities

The Section 811 Rental Assistance Program is an initiative funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development aimed at keeping people with disabilities out of institutional housing by supporting independent living.

As the grantee, the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency is partnering with the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services to administer the program. With referrals received throughout the state, regional housing coordinators are working closely with the local lead agencies to build a referral network supporting Section 811 units.

Growing Participation by Rental Properties

The success of this program is based largely on the participation of property owners and management agents willing to commit units for Section 811 referrals. To date, PHFA has signed 28 rental assistance contracts with 149 units. An additional 17 units have been committed through an agreement to enter into a rental assistance contract.

This spring, PHFA expanded its outreach to encourage Section 811 participation through its 2017-2018 allocation plan for federal Low-Income Housing Tax Credits. Applicants for these resources may receive ranking points if new rental assistance contracts are signed and unit thresholds are met in existing developments, advancing the goal of supplying Section 811 referrals.

Special thanks go to the following participants for their commitment to the Section 811 program: Pennrose Management Company, Mission First, Fairville Management Company, HDC Mid-Atlantic, Monarch Management Group, Beaver County Housing Authority, Franklin County Housing Authority, Ingerman, Conifer, JLD Management Company, and Women’s Community Revitalization Project.
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Tom Wolf, Governor | Brian Hudson, Executive Director & CEO
THE LEGISLATIVE REPORT

Provided by David Hunter, Policy Director, Housing Alliance of PA, PAHRA Legislative and Government Affairs Consultant

FEDERAL

The FY18 federal budget and appropriations process is underway. The Administration’s release of its full budget request included $7.4 billion (15%) in proposed reductions to HUD’s overall budget, including but not limited to the zeroing out of HOME ($950 million) and CDBG ($3 billion), and deep cuts to Contract renewals ($1.7 billion) and Public Housing Operating and Capital Funding ($500 million and $1.3 billion, respectively). See chart on page 13 for additional details.

With this request in hand, the House of Representatives initiated its own budget and appropriations process. The Appropriations Committee is actively working on its 12 regular appropriations bills - including the THUD bill. For example, the full Committee recently approved the FY18 Defense and Legislative Branch appropriations bills. NAHRO also expects the THUD bill to be marked up in the near future. Unlike most years, however, the House has yet to pass a budget resolution for FY18 – typically the starting point of the process.

Under the Congressional Budget Act, the annual congressional budget resolution sets a total for appropriated funding for the next fiscal year. That total is constrained by the multi-year caps of the 2011 Budget Control Act (BCA), which are further reduced by sequestration. Once the budget resolution sets a total, the House and Senate Appropriations Committees are required to subdivide that total among the 12 regular appropriations bills.

This means that the Appropriations committee is considering individual bills without an overall spending plan and priorities, and without debating how funding for one bill will affect funding for the others — an important issue given that overall funding under the current annual budget caps falls short of meeting the full range of national needs. Additionally, the overall BCA caps for FY18 fall by about $3 billion for non-defense programs and $2 billion for defense compared to the 2017 levels, even before adjusting for inflation.

Other macro-level factors, external to the budget process but likely to impact the timing and outcome of FY18 appropriations negotiations, include: health care reform, tax reform (including efforts to protect/expand the Low Income Housing Tax Credit), and debt ceiling limit negotiations.

Given the limited amount of legislative days before the end of the fiscal year, some members of Congress have called for the August congressional recess to be canceled. Advocacy groups in DC have also heard that the House may use an omnibus spending measure to pass some or all appropriations bills, including the THUD bill, prior to September 30th. Stay tuned for further details.

PAHRA Federal Advocacy

In this context, PAHRA’s Legislative Committee is actively working on FY18 appropriations. Specifically, the Committee is coordinating with Housing Alliance staff to meet with PA delegation members during July and August to urge level-or-better funding for priority programs in FY18. This work includes:

- The Housing Alliance organized one-on-one meetings in DC with specific PA delegation members on July 19. Meetings were secured meetings with Reps. Barletta, Dent (Appropriations), Meehan, Rothfus and Shuster. Meetings have also been requested with Senators Casey and Toomey, and with Representatives Brady and Evans.

- The Alliance held a DC reception on July 19th as well, which Senators Toomey and Casey agreed to co-host. All members of the PA delegation were invited. The theme was Rural and Suburban Homelessness in Pennsylvania. PAHRA member and Executive Director of Chester County Housing Authority, Dale Gravett, was a speaker. Reps. Rothfus (R-12) and Thompson (R-5), and staff from the office of Rep. Kelly (R-3), were also confirmed to attend.

- August recess visits are being planned with Reps. Dent, Barletta, Meehan, Rothfus, and Shuster. Housing Alliance staff is organizing these meetings on behalf of and with PAHRA. There will be a PAHRA lead for each meeting: Dan Farrell (Dent), Leo Agresti (Barletta), Dale Gravett (Meehan), Frank Aggazio (Rothfus), and Andrew French (Shuster). Meeting dates were being secured at the time of this writing.

- Reflecting Rep. Dent’s position on the Appropriations Committee, we are also asking specific PAHRA members and other organizations located in or near PA’s 15th Congressional District to contact his office to urge a maximum funding for the FY18 THUD spending bill. The Housing Alliance is coordinating this outreach.

- FY18 Appropriations Dear Colleague Letter – Rep. Costello has agreed to circulate a PA Republican-only Dear Colleague letter (being drafted by the Housing Alliance staff) addressed to the Chairs and Ranking Minority Members of the House Appropriations Committee and THUD Subcommittee. The letter will urge “level or better” funding for federal housing, homeless assistance and community development programs that benefit communities throughout Pennsylvania.
Protect Our Schools from Tax Delinquents Act of 2017 (HR 614)

Rep. Meehan introduced this bill in January 2017 to require that each housing assistance payments (HAP) contract provide that the owner timely pay all school real estate taxes, and that upon notification of a tax delinquency by a taxing authority, the PHA shall abate all of the rental assistance amounts for the property and transfer them monthly to the taxing authority, until the delinquency is eliminated.

The bill does not authorize or establish any cause or grounds for the termination of the tenancy of any tenant from any dwelling unit assisted under the rental assistance voucher program.

The Department of Housing and Urban Development must maintain a database of information regarding owners of dwelling units: (1) assisted under the program whose housing assistance payments contracts have been terminated for noncompliance with the requirements of this bill, and (2) with respect to whom assistance amounts have been abated and transferred to a taxing authority.

Action: The Legislative Committee agreed to engage Rep. Meehan about the difficulties that this bill would create for Housing Authorities that have to implement these provisions, including administering payments to taxing authorities. Dale Gravett from the Housing Authority of the County of Chester will raise this issue with Rep. Meehan in an upcoming conversation.

STATE

Prevailing wage

Two recent changes in the administration of Pennsylvania’s prevailing wage law have created a great deal of consternation among housing developers and program administrators, especially in the rural parts of the state. First, the Department of Community and Economic Development issued guidance stating that projects which were exempt from the federal Davis-Bacon wage rates (i.e., small projects) would be subject to state prevailing wages even if there was no state money in the project as long as the work exceeded the $25,000 threshold. This impacted home repair programs as well as developments of fewer than 12 units with HOME funding or 8 units with CDBG funding.

Second, as developers and home repair program administrators applied for PA wage rate determinations, they learned that the Department of Labor and Industry stopped issuing residential wage rates about two years ago. Following two meetings with L&I, PAHRA members and Housing Alliance staff, L&I determined that it would issue residential wage rates for single-family owner-occupied homes. This somewhat eased the burden on home repair programs, although costs still rose over non-wage rate jobs; it also left small developers scrambling to fill large budget gaps.

In February, Senator Gene Yaw (R – reintroduced a bill (SB 333) to raise the exemption threshold from $25,000 to $180,000. The bill currently has 12 cosponsors and is being considered by the Senate Labor and Industry Committee. Similar to what we have seen in previous legislative sessions and reflecting strong interest in the issue, a number of other prevailing wage bills have been or will be introduced in the House.

In June, Rep. Fred Keller (R-Snyder) introduced HB 1481, which would exempt residential rehab projects of less than eight units from the PA Prevailing Wage Act. The bill currently has 22 cosponsors, and has been referred to the House Labor and Industry Committee. At a meeting in mid-June on prevailing wage issues sponsored by the Mifflin County Planning Commission and Board of Commissioners, Rep. Keller said that Republican leaders in the House and Senate expect to have the votes to pass the bill during the current legislative session and are motivated to do so.

PAHRA’s spring conference also included a workshop on Pennsylvania’s prevailing wage law, its applicability to housing and redevelopment projects, and related compliance requirements.

Action: The application of state prevailing wage requirements to affordable housing projects – such as Owner Occupied Housing Rehab projects for which DCED awards approximately $11 million in HOME and CDBG funding to eligible municipalities and counties annually – creates significant challenges for the use of these funds and for the viability of such projects.

A small working group including Dan Farrell, Andrew French, Rich Kisner, Ken Pick, Mark Rafail and Housing Alliance staff met in early July to discuss strategy. Next steps include requesting meetings with Irwin Aronson, Sen. Yaw and Rep. Keller. The Committee will continue to monitor this issue, and is likely to request Board approval to pursue a resolution to address these problems through legislation going forward.

Neighborhood Assistance Program

Rep. O’Neill (R-Bucks) and Sen. Fontana (D-Allegheny) reintroduced bills (HB 645 and SB 512) to double the allocation of Neighborhood Assistance Program (NAP) tax credits from $18 million to $36 million. NAP has been funded at $18 million since its inception in 1967, except for two years during the recession when it was reduced. This model public-private partnership program can address many needs of low income people, including housing, education, crime prevention, and food insecurity.
HB 645 was approved by the House Finance Committee in early May and is pending on the House floor. SB 512 is pending with the Senate Finance Committee. NAP continues to enjoy strong bipartisan support, many House Democrats voted against HB 645 in committee, as part of a strategy to get Republicans to also raise additional sources of revenue to address overall budget deficit issues. SB 512 is currently being considered by the Senate Finance Committee.

**Action:** PAHRA’s board approved issuing a letter of support for these bills. The Legislative Committee is monitoring state budget negotiations underway now, and will provide an update on NAP expansion efforts soon.

**Blighted Property Legislation**

Clear Title Introduced respectively by Rep. Culver (R-Northumberland) and Sen. Argall (R-Schuylkill, Berks), HB 352 and SB 434 provide a process for long-term residents to gain title to their properties after 10 years rather than the current 21, making it easier for them to maintain their homes. The bills would apply where the owner of record has died or disappeared, and the resident has occupied the property for at least 10 years. The bills only apply to single family (i.e., single household) homes on a ½ acre or less. HB 352 was passed by the full House in early May and is now pending with the Senate Judiciary Committee. SB 434 passed the Senate unanimously in early June and is now pending with the House Judiciary Committee. The bills are expected to receive final approval by both chambers in the near future and then go to the governor for signature.

**Action:** The Board approved a letter of support for SB 434, which was issued on June 5th, prior to final Senate passage of the bill.

**Tax Abatement Rep.** Ward (R-Blair) reintroduced her bill (HB 758) to provide for tax abatements for mixed-used developments. Current law allows tax abatements on improvements to residential property (Improvement of Deteriorating Real Property or Areas Tax Exemption Act) or industrial and commercial properties (Local Economic Revitalization Tax Assistance Act). HB 758 specifically covers mixed-use developments. HB 758 passed the House in April, and referred and approved by the Senate Urban Affairs & Housing Committee in May. It is currently pending on the Senate floor.

**Action:** At its June meeting, PAHRA’s Board approved the issuance of a letter of support for HB 758 prior to final vote by the Senate. The letter will be issued when the bill is next considered on the Senate floor.

**Expansion of Land Bank Powers to Redevelopment Authorities**

Sen. Patrick Stefano (R-Fayette) introduced SB 667 in May. The bill intends to provide redevelopment authorities with the same powers currently as land banks through the Pennsylvania Land Bank Act (Act 153 of 2012). SB 667 was approved by the Senate Urban Affairs & Housing Committee in May and is currently pending with the Appropriations Committee.

**Action:** The Legislative Committee anticipates requesting Board approval for a letter of support when the legislation moves forward.

**Requirements for Tax Sale Purchase of Abandoned Properties**

Introduced by Senator Patrick Browne (R-Lehigh), SB 340 would require tax sale purchasers of blighted properties to enter into a redevelopment agreement with the local municipality or redevelopment authority, including a performance bond.

**Action:** PAHRA’s Legislative Committee has discussed this bill previously and plans to develop language that would create flexibility with regard to the redevelopment agreement and bond provisions. Andrew French and David Hunter will develop and circulate recommendations for the flexibility in the bill language that we seek.

**Land Bank Exemption from the Realty Transfer Tax (RTT)**

Rep. Caltagirone (D-Berks) has reintroduced his bill (HB 1076) to encourage land banks to use property to address homelessness and also to exempt land bank transactions from the Realty Transfer Tax. An exemption from the state share of the RTT was already passed, but legislation is needed to cover the local RTT.

**Action:** PAHRA’s Board of Directors approved issuing a letter of support on HB 1076, which will be issued when the bill is considered by the House Urban Affairs Committee – likely to occur in the fall.

**Uniform Blight Definition** – The draft definition was developed by DCED at the request of the Blight Task Force. DCED previously collected input from interested parties, including the Housing Alliance. DCED shared its current draft definition at the Task Force’s most recent meeting, and is seeking additional input. To that end, Senator Argall plans to introduce a bill with DCED’s draft language in the near future.

**Action:** The draft definition will be circulated to Legislative Committee members for review and comment. Andrew French and David Hunter will review the language and develop recommendations for consideration by the Committee by September.

**Pennsylvania “VAWA”**

Last fall, Sen. Art Haywood (D-Philadelphia, Montgomery) introduced SB 1387 amending the PA Housing Authorities Law to provide protections to victims of domestic violence.
and sexual assault. However, once the new Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) regulations came out, SB 1387 needed to be redrafted. In January, PAHRA and Housing Alliance staff met with Sen. Haywood’s staff and representatives of the PA Coalition Against Domestic Violence and the PA Coalition Against Rape to discuss changes to the bill. The bill is being rewritten but has not yet been reintroduced. We will continue to monitor developments on this legislation.

### FY18 Budget Chart

#### For Selected HUD and USDA Programs

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HOW CAN HOUSING AND REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITIES TAKE CHARGE OF ENERGY COSTS WHEN EVERY DOLLAR COUNTS?

POWERFUL SAVINGS STARTS HERE.

For 25 years, Chrislynn Energy Services has been a proud member of the PAHRA, fueling companies and residences across the area with the sound decisions and trusted gas and electric services that lead to real savings.

With Chrislynn Energy Services acting as your independent energy consultant, we help you make sense of the complex deregulated utility industry. So you always get the right utilities, and the right suppliers, at the right price.

To Learn How Chrislynn Can Help You Take Charge of Your Energy Prices and Save…

Contact Chrislynn Energy Services today for a free quote. Visit www.chrislynnenergy.com or call us at 1-888-431-1553.
Amidst all of the depressing reports of funding reductions and budget cuts, there still remains some good news for PHA’s regarding your utility and energy expenses.

For years Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) that were engaged in an Energy Performance Contract (EPC) were discouraged from looking for lower energy prices. This conflict has been resolved and clarification can be found in HUD Notice: PIH-2014-18 (HA).

The purpose of this HUD Notice is to encourage the use of on-site utility technologies such as renewable energy and deregulated energy markets to locate lower energy prices.

The notice explains how to use the Rate Reduction Incentive (RRI) and keep the savings resulting from a lower price for natural gas and electricity.

PHAs can now take a lower energy price and can keep 50% of the savings without entering into an EPC. PHAs can keep 100% of the savings if the Rate Reduction is part of an EPC.

PHAs can also keep 50% of any savings they find for tenants who pay for their own utilities.

PHAs are now able to take advantage of the many energy opportunities offered in deregulated states such as PA, OH, MD, NJ and others. A list of deregulated states can be found on our web site at www.chrislynnenergy.com.

PHAs can buy, or lease solar panels and take advantage of net-metering to lower electricity costs or even turn a profit. Check out the Winter 2015-16 issue of the PAHRA Monitor to see our article about a solar project completed by Westmoreland County Housing Authority, Putting Solar Where The Sun Don’t Shine. Solar projects currently provide tax-credits which can be used by a private-public partnership between a PHA and a solar developer. There are many variations and techniques of other on-site generation for PHAs to explore.

We find HUD Notice: PIH-2014-18 very encouraging and we are available to help Authorities locate and compare competitive offers from suppliers, as not all offers are equal. Please contact our friendly team of knowledgeable energy consultants for more information or if you have any questions. Email info@chrislynnenergy.com or call toll free 888-431-1553.

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1-888-431-1553
HUD Establishes Task Force to Consider Repeal, Replacement or Modification to Regulations
PHADA Submits Recommendations

Submitted by Tim Kaiser, Executive Director, Public Housing Authorities Directors Association

The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) issued a notice of request for comment in the Federal Register on May 15, 2017. The notice, titled, “Reducing Regulatory Burden; Enforcing the Regulatory Reform Agenda Under Executive Order 13777,” states that HUD is reviewing its existing regulations to assess their compliance costs and reduce regulatory burden. HUD is also currently in the process of establishing a Regulatory Task Force which will be responsible for identifying agency regulations that should be repealed, replaced or modified. This was an excellent opportunity for housing authorities (HAs) and industry groups to provide helpful feedback to the Department that could have positive impacts on agencies; the Department received over 420 comments.

A full copy of comments submitted by PHADA can be found at: http://www.phada.org/pdf/FRNoticeComments_ReducingRegulatoryBurden_FINAL.pdf

While PHADA’s response went into great detail regarding those regulations and/or HUD guidance that should be repealed, replaced or modified, and the reasons why, the Association also placed a great deal of emphasis on the current environment and the critical need for deregulation and other reforms. As your agencies are all well aware, HAs across the country have been challenged with historically low funding levels and pro-rations for their rental assistance programs, along with years of uncertainty due to Congress’ inability to agree on budget priorities, strict budget caps and the threat of sequestration. As a result of these challenges, many HAs have reduced staffing levels and made other administrative cuts to their programs. As if all of this were not dire enough, PHADA reiterated to the Department that agencies nationwide have seen significantly increased administrative and regulatory burdens and have been inundated with new rules and regulations from the Department. These additional reporting and recordkeeping hours directly results in housing authority staff time diverted away from the core mission of providing affordable rental housing and other related services.

As a result, PHADA argued that the repeal, replacement or modification of some or all of these overly burdensome reporting requirements is not only in the best interest of the low-income residents that HAs serve, but also in the best interest of the Department, which has long struggled with a lack of staffing and budgetary resources, as well. In response to the specific information request of the Department’s Regulatory Task Force, PHADA respectfully requested, in a 20-page comment letter to the Department, that the task force seriously consider the repeal, replacement or modification to the following regulations and/or HUD guidance:

- Assessment of Fair Housing (AFH) Tool
- Section 3 Proposed Rule
- Demolition/Disposition Proposed Rule and Regulations
- Uniform Physical Condition Standards for the Voucher Program (UPCS-V)
- Asset Management Reversal and COCC Proposed Changes
- PHAS/SEMAP Rules and Regulations
- PHA Annual and Five-Year Plan
- Environmental Review Requirements
- Community Service and Self-Sufficiency Requirement (CSSR) for Public Housing
- Proposed Physical Needs Assessment (PNA)
- Energy Benchmarking of Public Housing Proposed Information Collection
- Proposed Administrative Fee Formula for the Housing Choice Voucher Program
- Executive Compensation Salary Cap
- Real Estate Assessment Center (REAC) Standards Guidance
- HUD-REAC Contractor Inspection System
- Smoke Free Public Housing Final Rule and PIH Notice
- Violence Against Women’s Act Guidance
- Small Area Fair Market Rents Final Rule
Included below is a selection of highlights from the comment letter:

“PHADA and its members fully support affirmatively furthering fair housing, as well as effective and efficient approaches to satisfying this goal. However, HUD’s developed AFH tools are ill-considered, overly burdensome and of little use to local agencies in addressing fair housing issues. The tool requires agencies nationwide to spend hundreds of thousands of hours annually addressing the barriers facing resident’s access to good schools, job opportunities and mass transit, even though housing professionals have virtually no control over these barriers in local communities.”

“The Department should also consider the fact that initiatives like Section 3 are perhaps better served in other Departments, like the Department of Labor, rather than HUD in which the primary goal is to safely and affordably house low-income households.”

“Fundamentally, the problem with HUD’s Notice, proposed rule, and general policy on demolition/disposition is that they ignore clear congressional intent to leave demolition/disposition decisions to the discretion of PHAs and the local planning process in determining when demolition/disposition is in the best interests of the residents and the community.”

“HUD and Congress should suspend non-statutory PHAS and SEMAP compliance and make statutory provision scores advisory only, due to the fact that HAs’ PHAS and SEMAP scores have suffered at no fault of their own as a result of federal funding levels. It is unreasonable to hold agencies accountable to a standard that is nearly impossible to meet at significantly reduced funding levels.”

“Overall, the observed increases in questions and concerns related to guidance, processes and procedures connected with REAC inspections has resulted in confusion and frustration within the industry. Furthermore, REAC has demonstrated a pattern of disregard for the American Procedures Act.”

“It often seems as if the Department and Congress do not recognize the industry’s sense of urgency; HUD continues to approach issues and promulgate rules as if the landscape of affordable housing programs has not been dramatically altered in recent years. This mindset often thwarts a HA’s ability to adapt and to be flexible in the current environment, and jeopardizes the very foundation of our programs and the affordable housing opportunities that children, the disabled and the elderly have come to count on.”

“In determining what regulations, notices and/or guidance to repeal, replace or modify, the Department should seriously consider the core mission of HAs and retain only those requirements that are essential and allow agencies to operate with the greatest flexibility possible. This will allow agencies to better serve their current residents and potentially have the ability to serve many more in need.”
The assisted housing industry is changing. Honeywell has the experience and expertise that housing authorities, re-development agencies and multi-family owners need to sustain success.

Now more than ever, it’s important to have partners who can bring sound, strategic planning to help level the playing field in an uncertain and challenging industry. Honeywell Sustainable Housing Solutions works to leverage such programs as Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC), Capital Fund Finance Program (CFFP) and Energy Performance Contract (EPC), in addition to other sources of capital. We optimize operational funds while improving the marketability, safety and security of the communities we serve. Our extensive experience in the housing industry provides the opportunity for your program to achieve sustainability because we understand the unique issues facing stakeholders and diligently work to address challenges and find common solutions. Let us put your housing authority on the path of sustainability.

Honeywell

To learn more about Honeywell solutions, contact Rick Sawicki at 614-477-7612 or richard.sawicki@honeywell.com
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A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE TAKES COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING TODAY
A Kilobyte of Prevention is Worth a Gigabyte of Cure

Infradapt is an IT company in a technology era, so we tend to talk in bytes and bits.

The actual saying goes as follows: "An Ounce of Prevention is Worth a Pound of Cure." – Ben Franklin.

Arguably one of our wisest Founding Fathers made this statement in 1735, a statement which still holds true value in today’s technologic cyber world.

Very simply, when dealing with most everything, but particularly with technology, it is better to prevent problems ahead of time and to have a team of experts ready to expunge problems if they ever arise. The alternative is to wait for something to break and have your entire technology stack come to a standstill until you can find someone to fix it.

Realistically, we all take technology for granted and don’t think about our cell phone screen until it cracks; let us call this a Break-Fix model.

Understandably, you do not want to pay someone to fix something unless it is broken. A Break-Fix model may be acceptable for household items, however, when you have computers, networks, and systems in place in order for your business to function, the Break-Fix model is a terrible reactionary strategy.

Let’s face it; technology impacts every one of your employees in one way or another. When technology is not working properly, employees are not working efficiently (or at all). This obviously hurts your overall business functions and your bottom line.

If your employees cannot function at their best how can your business function at its best?

We have all had those experiences where we are sitting there watching an hour glass on our computer screen turn, waiting for the computer to do something. Maybe it takes a few minutes to load that website, or maybe the computer ends up crashing. Take this one experience and multiply it across an entire workplace and productivity drops dramatically, not to mention the impact on employee morale.

Traditionally, in a Break-Fix model your IT support company operates like a plumber would. When something breaks, you give them a call. The IT company sends someone over to look at the problem, provides an overpriced estimate, and maybe even charges you for the estimate.

More perversely, your “Break-Fix IT Guy” only gets paid when your systems go down; he spends most of his time fixing the issues at hand without worrying about critical future problems, updates, or security.

Since your “Break-Fix IT Guy” only gets paid when something breaks, why would he bother preventing issues to begin with?

This is exactly why more and more businesses are shifting to the “Managed IT Services” support model.

At Infradapt, we only serve clients via the “Managed IT Services” model, because it is the right thing to do.

“Managed IT Services” agreements must be offered at a fixed cost, forcing the IT service provider to have a vested interest in preventing issues. At Infradapt we actively work and monitor your technology systems to make sure they are working efficiently and effectively, seeking to prevent issues before they even happen.
Infradapt works with many Housing Authorities across the state of Pennsylvania through a “Managed IT Services” support model and offers additional resources to enable or enhance productivity.

The right technology infrastructure enables Housing Authorities to be more efficient and save money.

Having a full technology team working to solve IT problems is usually better than having one guy.

Infradapt takes care of the technology stack, so Housing Authorities can go back to what they do best, focusing on their tenant’s need for safe, secure and affordable housing.

We invite you to a FREE technological assessment and consultation. Please call us at 800-394-2301 or go to www.infradapt.com to learn more!

When your technology works smoothly, your employees can get their jobs done. It really is the most optimal business decision that enhances productivity and morale.

What are some of the benefits of having a Managed Services Provider? (MSP):

- Reduced Costs & Fixed Monthly Fee
- Reliability & Performance
- Business Continuity & Efficiency

In a “Managed IT Services” support model our interests are aligned with the client’s interests. Both parties desire a stable technology infrastructure because they both lose money when things break.

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Relationships built on trust.

Trust built on performance.

Successful housing and redevelopment projects are built on a foundation of trust.

You can rely on our team of experienced lawyers the way your communities rely on you.
On June 1st, I walked into the NAHRO building with a great sense of pride and optimism. I am proud to have an opportunity to apply my decades of experience and my commitment to this amazing and resilient industry, in a strong, historied organization. I am also excited to have an opportunity to learn more about your work and the obstacles that slow you down or stop you in your tracks. Over the months and years to come, I will be working with the NAHRO team to make NAHRO even more responsive to you and a stronger industry leader. I will also work with our traditional partners, while nurturing new ones, as we continue to make the case for affordable housing and effective community development.

It has been busy here in D.C. A new HUD Deputy Secretary, Pam Patenaude, is nearing confirmation. We supported her nomination, given her rich background in our industry, and we are hopeful that her experience will inform future policy decisions. Congress also held hearings on the Administration’s baffling budget which left many of us, including, (thankfully) several Members of Congress, scratching our heads. Our elected representatives will be leaving Washington soon to head home for the summer. Don’t miss this opportunity to meet and communicate with them. The message needs to be loud and clear from all parts of the country: affordable housing matters to everyone. When you communicate with your elected representatives, whether in person, by phone or electronically, be prepared to explain the transformational experiences that families have undergone because they have a safe, decent and affordable roof over their heads. So many of the stories we help shape at our workplaces every day will tug at heads and hearts – we need to tell them.

Here are some thoughts on what you can share with them.

1. Public housing is a significant part of this country’s infrastructure. It is important that the Operating Subsidy funding level is equal to 100 percent of subsidy eligibility and that the Capital Fund receives $5 billion this year.

2. If adequate funding is not available, housing agencies need maximum flexibility to both run their programs and preserve their assets.

3. The Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) is an important resource to build and preserve affordable housing. Without LIHTC, there would be virtually no affordable housing production.

4. The HOME and CDBG programs should not be eliminated. Both programs are vital to local economic development efforts.

5. Now more than ever we need the federal government to support affordable housing, because new residential construction is well below the rate from the 1980s and 1990s, and over 11 million households who rent are paying more than 50 percent of their income for housing. (2017 Harvard State of the Nation’s Housing).

If you’d like assistance with your message and/or outreach, we’re happy to help. We’ll soon be launching our 2017 August Advocacy campaign! NAHRO will be joining NLIHC’s Housing Week of Action, then continue through August with advocacy resources and reminders on vital topics such as the public housing Capital Fund, the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit, small housing agency regulatory reform, housing as critical infrastructure and FY 2018 appropriations. Keep in touch with us via Twitter at @nahronational and watch out for a message from me to kick things off.

It is clear to me that we cannot afford to be timid and reactive any longer. If we want to ensure that our properties and communities remain solid resources for families into the future, we must do more to articulate our role in our towns, urban and rural. So often our work is passed off as a passive contributor to our local economy, when, in fact, we are economic engines, particularly in smaller communities. It is time for us to portray our work with strength, unapologetically.

Finally, I cannot wait to meet you at NAHRO’s National Conference which will be in Pittsburgh this year, from October 27-29. Many of our colleagues in Pennsylvania and throughout the country will gather to discuss best practices, the latest actions impacting our industry, and also to network. See you then!

Adrianne Todman
Did you know that the US Department of Housing and Urban Development’s (HUD) Moving to Work (MTW) program can boost your agency’s effectiveness and improve the lives of your residents?

In 2016, HUD expanded the MTW program to allow 100 new agencies to join by 2020. While the selection process is competitive, every agency that goes through the application process can benefit by learning how the transformative power of the MTW program can apply to their work.

The MTW program is unique in that it exempts agencies from many regulations and allows them to combine federal funding, which provides flexibility and encourages innovative thinking. All of the activities that MTW agencies pursue must work towards achieving cost savings, expanded housing opportunities, or help to move families towards self-sufficiency.

HAI Group commissioned Abt Associates to conduct a two-part study of the MTW program, in collaboration with the Council of Large Public Housing Authorities (CLPHA), the Public Housing Director’s Association (PHADA), the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (NAHRO), and the MTW Steering Committee.

The first part of the study, released in December 2014, found that MTW agencies are better than comparison agencies on most performance measures, particularly in regards to achieving self-sufficiency, due to their innovative approach to serving residents and fostering partnerships within the community.

The second part of the study, released in April 2017, took a critical step in beginning to develop performance measures for the MTW program that in the future, can be incorporated into agency data collection systems.

With all of this valuable data, HAI Group has collaborated with the Center for Urban and Regional Studies at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill to produce ‘The MTW Guide’ to be released late this summer. The Guide can serve as a roadmap for agencies seeking to apply to the MTW program, current MTW agencies looking to learn from their peers, or non-applicants hoping to implement applicable MTW best practices at their agencies.

Based on interviews and site visits with current MTW agencies, the Guide contains chapters on:

- Determining if MTW is right for your agency
- Designing an MTW program
- Developing data collection and evaluation strategies
- Preparing an MTW application

Early findings stress the importance of creating a culture of innovation, restructuring software systems for data collection and evaluation, and promoting the program both externally and internally. To read the early findings and add your name to receive an exclusive copy of the MTW Guide, please visit www.housingcenter.com/MTW.
ARE YOU NEW TO TAX CREDITS OR LOOKING FOR A REFRESHER?

LIHTC 101: Tax Credit Basics will help your agency capitalize on available opportunities.

Visit www.housingcenter.com/LIHTC to watch a preview and test your knowledge with our one-minute self-assessment quiz!

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Integrating Health Care/Wellness/Insurance Consultations for Seniors in Affordable Housing

By: Erin Hart, Director, American HealthCare Group

Senior housing facilities who receive tax credits are required to provide Supportive Services as part of their agreement with the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency (PHFA). These services are designed to help seniors age-in-place by addressing barriers to healthy food, transportation, health and wellness services, financial assistance and social activities. All senior properties can benefit by offering similar services to their residents. Although non-tax credit properties may not have an escrowed budget to pay for such services, there is evidence that the cost of property management can be reduced by integrating on-site services for these residents. Supportive services programs for seniors decrease tenancy issues such as evictions, housekeeping, vacancies, personal hygiene and rent payments.

Health Care and Wellness Services

In order to age-in-place, senior residents need to have access to health care and wellness services. Because transportation may be a barrier in some instances, it is extremely beneficial to provide these services on-site, perhaps in the community room. For example, local health care providers will participate in health fairs and/or on-going monthly or quarterly social events. The types of providers who will come on-site include home health, personal care, hospice, retail pharmacies, primary care practices, mental health providers, dentists, non-profit organizations and immunization providers. They typically won’t charge for these services and may even sponsor the programs. Some services can be paid for by the resident’s health insurance. It is important to vet these providers to make sure their marketing practices won’t be aggressive. That being said, this consideration should not be a barrier for bringing professionals on-site.

Health Insurance Consultations

The average consumer is faced with a barrage of advertisements, political opinions, news headlines and well-meaning friends and relatives. Health insurance is a financial tool that should be used to save money for the consumer. However, the messaging coming from all of these sources is confusing and leads residents to tie up hundreds or thousands of dollars in unnecessary medical expenses – either insurance premiums or copays/deductible/co-insurance payments. Salespeople representing a limited number of products are focused on selling only those products. On the other hand, independent insurance brokers who provide a consultative approach to finding the best policy can be a valuable asset. These health industry professionals can utilize on-line tools, such as Medicare’s website or healthcare.gov to help residents navigate the various plans available in the marketplace. Independent brokers should find the best product for the resident, regardless of the commission or sale.

American HealthCare Group provides Supportive Services and Health/Wellness services to over 150 senior affordable housing communities and thousands of residents through Pennsylvania.
Worry-Free Alarms are Ideal for Multifamily Applications

Powered by sealed-in, 10-year lithium batteries, Kidde’s Worry-Free line of smoke and CO alarms use only one battery for the life of the alarm to provide 24/7 fire safety protection.

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  No stolen batteries or worry of non-functioning alarm.

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  Battery never needs replacing. No need for maintenance personnel to change batteries.

- **Tamper Resistant:**
  Ensures uninterrupted performance and reduces liability.

- **Product Lifelong Warranty:**
  Alarms are UL Listed, and last 10 years.

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Say “**good night**” to low battery chirps and “**hello**” to hassle-free protection with Kidde’s Worry-Free smoke and carbon monoxide (CO) alarms.

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Room specific features like a super-bright LED in the hallway and reduced nuisance alarms in the kitchen, make it simple and easy to pick the right alarm for the right location. Plus, save $40 over the life of each alarm in battery costs.

Available in battery only or hardwired with 10-year battery backup.
Overview

The US Department of Housing and Urban Development’s Continuum of Care (CoC) Program is designed to promote a community-wide commitment to the goal of ending homelessness; to provide funding for efforts by nonprofit providers, states, and local governments to quickly rehouse homeless individuals, families, persons fleeing domestic violence, and youth while minimizing the trauma and dislocation caused by homelessness; to promote access to and effective utilization of mainstream programs by the homeless; and to optimize self-sufficiency among those experiencing homelessness.

Eastern Pennsylvania Continuum of Care

The Eastern Pennsylvania Continuum of Care is comprised of five Regional Homeless Advisory Boards (RHABs) that identify local homeless issues, coordinate planning for projects, identify needs, and develop strategies and priorities to end homelessness in the local area.

Each RHAB is responsible for operationalizing the policies adopted by the CoC by working with their community to address and end homelessness locally. The five RHABs and the respective counties served by each RHAB are as follows:

- RHAB 1 (South Central) – Adams, Bedford, Blair, Cambria, Centre, Franklin, Fulton, Huntingdon, Somerset
- RHAB 2 (Lehigh Valley) – Lehigh, Northampton
- RHAB 3 (Central Valley) – Columbia, Cumberland, Juniata, Lebanon, Mifflin, Montour, Northumberland, Perry, Schuylkill, Snyder, Union
- RHAB 4 (Northern Tier) – Bradford, Clinton, Lycoming, Sullivan, Susquehanna, Tioga, Wyoming
- RHAB 5 (Pocono) – Carbon, Monroe, Pike, Wayne

Housing Crisis Response System

The Eastern Pennsylvania Continuum of Care’s housing crisis response system denotes all the services and housing available to persons who are at imminent risk of experiencing literal homelessness and those who are homeless.

Coordinated Entry System

Beginning in January 2018, the CoC’s Coordinated Entry System (CES) will coordinate access, assessment and referral into the housing crisis response system for all households and populations. CES will also attempt to divert households from entering shelter if possible. Diversion is a strategy that prevents homelessness for people seeking shelter by helping them identify immediate alternate housing arrangements and, if necessary, connecting them with services and financial assistance to help them return to permanent housing.

Consumers will have the opportunity to access the CES through either a toll-free Call Center or through designated Access Sites in each region (consumers will choose one or the other, not both). While all HUD-funded programs will be required to receive referrals from CES, all local housing and service providers will be encouraged to participate in order to maximize the efficient and effective use of all community resources to end homelessness. Coordinated Entry System client data will be entered, managed, saved and analyzed by the CoC’s Homeless Management Information System (HMIS).

Regional County Distribution for PA Eastern CoC

Coordinated Entry System Call Center

The Coordinated Entry System Call Center will be the virtual “front door” into the Eastern Pennsylvania Continuum of Care’s housing crisis response system. The
Call Center will accept toll-free, in-bound calls Monday through Friday between the business hours of 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. (at minimum) from any household, that is a configuration of persons in crisis, whatever their age or number (adults, youth, or children; singles or couples, with or without children), experiencing a housing crisis in the Eastern Pennsylvania Continuum of Care. After hours, the Call Center will answer in-bound calls live but will not be required to provide Coordinated Entry services, instead referring households directly to emergency services and/or instructing them to call back during business hours.

**Call Center Services**

The Call Center will provide the following services during business hours:

1. Field and record the answer to a brief set of pre-screening questions to determine the caller’s eligibility for entering the housing crisis response system. If the caller’s household is not eligible for services, the Call Center will refer the caller to other appropriate services, possibly to include a Domestic Violence hotline, homeless prevention services, or the Coordinated Entry System in their community of origin. The CoC estimates that the Call Center will receive up to 80,000 calls that require pre-screening in the calendar year 2018 and anticipates an average call duration of 10 minutes for the pre-screening process.

2. For callers that are eligible for CoC housing crisis response system services, the Call Center will:

   1) field the Vulnerability Index – Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (VI-SPDAT) assessment tool and enter the caller’s answers directly into HMIS;

   2) provide a direct referral to emergency services (such as outreach or shelter) if needed after attempting Diversion; and/or

   3) place the caller’s household on a Community Queue for housing services in HMIS (such as Rapid Re-Housing or Permanent Supportive Housing). The CoC estimates that 12,000 (15%) of the 80,000 calls received in the calendar year 2018 will require entry in the housing crisis response system and anticipates an average call duration of 30 minutes total to complete the pre-screen, VI-SPDAT and referral process depending on the caller’s disposition, household size and primary language.

3. Return messages from callers within 24 business hours.

4. Provide Community Queue status updates to households waiting for referrals to services.

5. If feasible, provide text messaging services to conduct pre-screens and provide Community Queue updates (the VI-SPDAT cannot be conducted via text message).

**Coordinated Entry System Leadership**

The Eastern Pennsylvania Continuum of Care Coordinated Entry System is being developed by a committee of public, private and nonprofit leaders chaired by Kathi Krablin of Valley Youth House, with representation from each of the five RHABs and the Housing Alliance of Pennsylvania. Consulting services are provided by Jason D. Alexander, Principal and Co-Founder of Capacity for Change, LLC. According to Mr. Alexander, “Coordinated entry is essential to every community’s ability to end homelessness rather than simply manage it. It’s also a systems change that will require time, patience, flexibility and willful collaboration to succeed.”

For more information, please visit www.pennsylvaniacoc.org/easterncommittees/coordinated-entry.
Like a Phoenix – Rising from the Ashes

By Leo A. Murray

Mount Carmel Township – Four years after a devastating fire engulfed several vacant structures in this tiny metropolis, the area was recently transformed into a picturesque neighborhood as a battle of blight in Northumberland County is moving at a pace even officials couldn’t believe.

Like a phoenix rising from the ashes, the Phoenix Court apartments – five units designed for elderly citizens getting by on fixed incomes – according to Ed Christiano, Executive Director of the Northumberland County Housing Authority, now stand as a “gateway to Mount Carmel Borough.” One of the units, Mr. Christiano said, is fully handicapped accessible.

In 2013, according to officials, an early morning fire raged through some row homes, leaving behind a series of blighted, uninhabitable structures.

At the grand opening a few weeks ago, Christiano told a local television station that Phoenix Court is one of the “best projects” he’s ever worked on. The executive director went on to say that the project, funded by multiple sources, “really cleaned up the neighborhood.”

According to the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED), Northumberland County in 2012 founded a “Blight Task Force” with multiple municipal partners within the county which have benefitted from numerous funding programs, including DCED’s Keystone Communities program and the HOME Neighborhood Assistance Program.

Phoenix Court not only supplied much needed low-income housing, but also offers ADA-compliant living space, suitable for a very low-income person with special needs, according to Michael Carpenter, the program manager for DCED’s Home Investment Partnership Program.

Carpenter, who writes a blog for DCED, sees a particular need for additional handicapped accessible units. “We need to have more housing that’s fully handicap-accessible and start thinking in terms of that kind of design,” he wrote in a recent blog.

According to Mr. Carpenter, the Phoenix Court project represents an ongoing widespread, proactive effort taking place throughout Northumberland County to address and resolve blight, making its communities safer, more beautiful, and places that residents can be proud to call home. Though it’s the first of such initiatives, Mr. Carpenter said, it certainly won’t be the last.

Up next, according to Mr. Christiano, five units for veterans. According to Christiano, most of the funds for that project have been secured and construction is expected to begin soon.
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A Service Program of the Pennsylvania Municipal League
Just before he departed the House recently to become a Fox News contributor, Utah Republican Jason Chaffetz proposed a housing stipend for members of Congress. “I think a $2,500 housing allowance would be appropriate and a real help to have at least a decent quality of life in Washington,” he said. “You shouldn’t have to be among the wealthiest of Americans to serve properly in Congress.”

It’s refreshing to have a prominent Republican lawmaker decry housing costs and the difficulty of making ends meet. But Chaffetz should recognize the significant housing subsidy that members of Congress and other wealthy Americans already receive, and the millions of struggling low income seniors, people with disabilities and families with children who receive none.

As a member of Congress, Chaffetz earned at least $174,000 per year, putting him in the top 8% of earners in the country. In 2008, his net worth was around $5.6 million (although it seems to have declined significantly in recent years), putting him in the top 3% of households in the US. That’s not unusual for members of Congress — their average wealth is just over $1 million. Most are homeowners and, if they have a mortgage on their home, they receive a housing subsidy in the form of the mortgage interest deduction. Subsidizing the homes of households even wealthier than Chaffetz — those in the top 1% of earners — costs U.S. taxpayers $10.5 billion each year.

Meanwhile, hundreds of thousands of people in the United States have no homes at all, and just 25% of the lowest income renters in need of assistance receive such help. Why? The main reason is our unbalanced federal housing policy: We spend more to subsidize the homes of 7 million of the highest income homeowners than to assist 55 million of the lowest income renters, those with the greatest and the clearest needs.

Chaffetz is certainly right about one thing — housing costs are increasingly out of reach, in the nation’s capital as well as his home state of Utah and throughout the country. This is especially true for the lowest income renters.

Every year, the National Low Income Housing Coalition calculates the amount someone needs to earn an hour to be able to afford to rent a modest two-bedroom apartment in every state, metro area, and jurisdiction across the country. Nationally, this “housing wage” is $21.21 per hour, nearly $5 more per hour than the average renter earns. In many states, the gap is even higher. In Washington, D.C., it takes a wage of $33.58 per hour to afford a two-bedroom apartment.

Seniors or people with disabilities living on fixed incomes and families with children whose parents work at very low-wage jobs often pay more than half of their income for their home. That puts them one financial emergency away from eviction and possible homelessness.

Research shows that in no state can the average extremely low-income household, those at or below 30% of the area median income, afford to pay the national monthly rent of $892 for a one-bedroom rental home. In fact, the average extremely low-income household cannot afford to spend more than $523 per month on rent.

The 5.5 million people with disabilities who rely on Supplemental Security Income (SSI) can afford a rent of just $221 per month. In 22 states, the average fair-market one-bedroom rent is more than the entire monthly income of an SSI recipient.
While low income renters struggle to afford their homes, the federal government provides ample housing subsidies to higher income homeowners with incomes greater than $100,000. Housing tax expenditures allow homeowners to subtract the interest paid on their mortgages and real estate taxes from their federal taxable income. These two deductions combined cost the federal government nearly $100 billion annually. Low and moderate income homeowners often receive no tax benefit from holding a mortgage because they don’t earn enough to itemize their taxes.

Comprehensive tax reform offers an opportunity to rebalance federal housing policy to provide housing subsidies to those most in need: the lowest income families, seniors, veterans and other struggling households. Modest reforms to the mortgage interest deduction can provide a tax break for millions more low-income homeowners and achieve significant savings to reinvest in highly targeted rental housing solutions — such as the national Housing Trust Fund and rental assistance programs that serve people with the greatest needs.

Chaffetz is right that you should not need to be wealthy to serve in Congress. But struggling households around the country should not need the wealth of a congressman to afford a home.
THE UNEMPLOYMENT HEARING:
Preparation and Conduct for Employers

Submitted by Debbie Gross / U•COMP Member Service Representative
With Contributions from Raziah Massey / Unemployment Hearing Consultant / Equifax Workforce Solutions

If you’ve ever been to an unemployment hearing, you know that they can be intimidating, causing you to feel scattered and unprepared. This article will help prepare you for those times when you must attend an unemployment hearing.

The most important thing you can do as an employer protesting a claim decision is to show up at the hearing. If you do not attend, it can increase the chances of a win for the claimant.

Your preparation is equally as important as attending the hearing. There are a number of things you can do to look and be prepared for the hearing.

First, it will be important for you to review the claimant’s personnel file. It can contain information that could be supportive to your case. Decide who will attend the hearing. You may want to consider having someone attend who has direct knowledge of the situation.

When you are compiling your case, expect that you will be repeating certain pieces of information that is in the case. Do not expect that the hearing officer will have the information that you submitted with your protest of the claim or the information that you may have provided to the State Office prior to the hearing. When preparing your documentation, be sure to:

1) Make three sets of documents – one set for yourself, one set for the claimant and one set for the Hearing Officer.

2) Make a brief outline of the testimony that will be heard and list the documents you will be offering. This will help you to remember all of the testimony that you want to present. Be sure to place this at the front of the packet.

3) Do not bring originals of any documents as you will most likely not receive them back.

4) Bring any witnesses to the hearing that support your case. Hearing officers do not generally attribute much credibility to written statements from witnesses who do not appear at hearings. Also statements cannot be cross-examined.

5) Phone hearings in Pennsylvania have become rare occurrences so be prepared to attend a live, in person hearing if you object to a claim decision.

At the hearing you will be able to review State Agency records of the claim. Be sure to bring your ID and a copy of the hearing notice. If possible, please try to arrive to the hearing 15 minutes before the scheduled start time and report to the receptionist.

Upon entering the hearing room be sure to sit where the Hearing Officer designates and give the Officer copies of your documents. You will be asked to introduce your witness(es).

Try to keep your answers to any questions brief, answering yes or no whenever possible. Have your documents organized and ready so you are able to read or work from them without having to search for the one you need.

You should speak slowly and louder than usual as the hearing will be recorded. There will be no stenographer at this point in the hearing process. If you are using the name of someone who is not in attendance you may be asked to spell their name and to indicate the importance of their role in the case.

During the hearing, if it becomes clear that you are missing an important document or a witness was not included in your preparation, you should request an adjournment of the hearing in order to obtain the necessary document or witness. This will not be a guarantee that your request will be granted, however this is accepted protocol.
You may summarize your case at the beginning and end of the hearing to illustrate why you feel the claimant should be disqualified. Include a statement showing why the claimant was terminated.

The manner in which you conduct yourself during the hearing will be very important and can influence the outcome. You may be questioned by the Hearing Officer. It will be important to allow the Hearing Officer to finish their question before you answer. When you answer, be accurate and if you don’t understand the question, ask for clarification. If you are not certain of the facts, admit that you don’t know the answer. Do not guess. Always answer the Hearing Officer’s questions even if they seem redundant. It will appear that a certain amount of documentation and testimony are redundant and this will require patience on your part.

Most importantly, do not argue or be rude when testifying. Keep your cool as it can reflect positively on you.

Remember also, if you are a U•COMP member, you are able to have an advocate with you that will guide you through the hearing process. This is one more advantage to being a U•COMP member.

For more information or for a non-binding U•COMP quote, please contact:

Debbie Gross
U•COMP Member Service Representative
Email: dgross@pml.org
Phone: 1-800-922-8063 *254
2017 PAHRA ANNUAL CONFERENCE
BEST PRACTICES SHOWCASE AND AWARDS

Conference Schedule (as of July 10, 2017)

Visit www.pahra.org for updated information on training sessions, speakers, events and other conference news.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sunday, September 17, 2017</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Early Bird Registration</td>
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<tr>
<td>4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.</td>
<td>PAHRA Committee Meetings</td>
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<tr>
<td>6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Board of Directors Meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>8:00 p.m. – 11:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Meet, Mix and Mingle Event</td>
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<tr>
<th>Monday, September 18, 2017</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7:30 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Breakfast Buffet</td>
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<tr>
<td>7:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Registration</td>
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<tr>
<td>8:10 a.m. – 8:40 a.m.</td>
<td>Welcome and Gathering Session, Adrianne Todman, NAHRO CEO Invited</td>
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<tr>
<td>8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.</td>
<td>NAHRO High Performance Management Seminar</td>
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<tr>
<td>8:40 a.m. – 9:40 a.m.</td>
<td>PAHRA Annual Business Meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:50 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Concurrent Educational Sessions</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:00 a.m. – 11:20 a.m.</td>
<td>Mid-Morning Refreshment Break</td>
<td>Generously Sponsored by Infradapt, LLC</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Concurrent Educational Sessions</td>
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<tr>
<td>2:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.</td>
<td>NAHRO High Performance Management Seminar</td>
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<tr>
<td>8:00 p.m. – 12:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Evening Hospitality and Networking Event</td>
<td>Generously Sponsored by Chrislynn Energy Services</td>
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Monday Concurrent Educational Sessions Include:

- **NAHRO High Performance Management Seminar**: Creating a Positive Operations Management Environment for Optimum Productivity – This intense two-day course is an excellent succession planning aid. Designed to groom those seeking or entering management level positions, as well as hone the skill set of current managers. Earn CEU’s and complete a key course required to obtain NAHRO Operations Management Certification (two-day course)

- **It’s EPIC!** – BDO PHA Finance provides an extensive overview of PIH Notice 2016-12 regarding new submission requirements for Capital Fund 5-Year Action Plans and Annual Statements, Environmental Reviews, and electronic reporting through EPIC (multi-session)

- **Lead Safe Housing** – PA is second only to the state of Minnesota in children with elevated blood lead levels. Representatives of the HUD Office of Lead Hazard Control review recent amendments to the Lead Safe Housing Rule. Also learn how Lancaster’s Lead Safe Task Force is leading the way in addressing local lead contamination issues (multi-session)

- **HUD Healthy Homes Initiative** – Geared toward identifying and promoting cost-effective preventive measures to minimize potential risks from home health hazards such as allergens, asthma, carbon-monoxide, radon, pesticides

- **Opening Doors to Lead the Way Home** – A panel of Continuum of Care participants will discuss effective efforts to address homelessness in PA through public/private partnerships, agency collaboration, provision of supportive services, pooled funding resources, and more

- **Continuum of Care: Shared Success** - Explore what has worked both locally in Montgomery County and multi-regionally in the 33 counties served by the Eastern PA CoC. Announcing the launch of the Coordinated Entry System Call Center.

- **Strategies for Inclusion of Affordable Housing in Your Community** – An interesting and informative panel discussion presented by Women in Housing and Finance-PA.
**Tuesday, September 19, 2017**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>8:00 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Breakfast Buffet</td>
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<tr>
<td>8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Registration</td>
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<tr>
<td>8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.</td>
<td>NAHRO High Performance Management Seminar</td>
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<tr>
<td>8:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Concurrent Educational Sessions</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Mid-Morning Refreshment Break <em>Generously Sponsored by Kidde-US</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>11:30 a.m. – 12:40 p.m.</td>
<td>Concurrent Educational Sessions</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:45 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Lititz Lunch and Learn Tour</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:45 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.</td>
<td>NAHRO High Performance Management Seminar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Best Practices Showcase and Presidential Cocktail Reception <em>Generously Sponsored by HARIE</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Annual Banquet and Awards Ceremony <em>Generously Sponsored by HARIE</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>9:00 p.m. – 12:00 a.m.</td>
<td>After-Party <em>Generously Sponsored by HAI Group</em></td>
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**Tuesday Concurrent Educational Sessions Include:**

- **NAHRO High Performance Management Seminar:** Creating a Positive Operations Management Environment for Optimum Productivity – NAHRO’s interactive HPM course provides the opportunity for participants to experiment and to experience critical tools and proven techniques that can assist them to more effectively manage workflow and supervise people (two-day course)

- **Financial Forum** – Blosky and Associates presents a multi-session workshop addressing a variety of HUD accounting topics, with a focus on audit preparation: suggested steps to take prior to the auditor’s visit; how to help make the audit go smoothly and quickly; tips to eliminate possible findings or management points. Q&A are encouraged to promote lively discussion.

- **No Ifs, Ands, or Butts: Implementing Smoke-Free Housing** – Discuss aspects of smoke-free implementation including informing and engaging residents, smoking cessation services, establishing policies, and enforcement (multi-session)

- **Getting Ahead: HUD Resident Services and Self-Sufficiency** – Learn more about available programs such as Book-Rich Environment, ConnectHome, Jobs Plus, juvenile and adult re-entry programs, Neighborhood Network centers, creating resident opportunities through ROSS and Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) grants

- **Addressing Blight Proactively to Favorably Impact Municipal Budgets** – Strategies to improve your municipality’s bottom line, reduce cost of public services and support long-term neighborhood stabilization

- **What’s New?** – The Latest Tools, Tactics and Trends for Fighting Blight – Improved tools provided by the legislature; funding sources for home repair, maintenance and demolition; updates on rental and vacant property registration

- **Lititz Lunch and Learn Tour** – Voted “America’s coolest small town” in 2013, Lititz continues to live up to its reputation. Lunch at one of the unique local eateries, learn about the town, view housing sites and redevelopment projects. Coordinated by Lancaster City Housing Authority, Lancaster County Housing and Redevelopment Authorities, and Lititz Borough

- **Best Practices Showcase** – Even if your agency did not submit an entry, join your colleagues to browse through the Showcase and share innovative ideas, view outstanding projects, learn about interesting programs, efficient policies and effective procedures that are successful in other H&CD agencies

**Wednesday, September 20, 2017**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Closing Breakfast &amp; Plenary Session <em>Generously Sponsored by Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency</em></td>
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**Keynote Speaker:** John G. Bravacos, J.D.

Mr. Bravacos was appointed as Lead Point of Contact, 2017 HUD Transition Landing Team, for the newly elected President and incoming administration; also a former Regional Director, HUD Region III, offering unique insider insights on current events in the H&CD industry

*(See next page for conference registration form.)*
2017 PAHRA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

(please use black ink and print clearly)

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Title: ________________________________

Organization: ________________________________

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Email: __________________

FULL PACKAGE:  □ Member - $300  □ Non-member - $340  □ Guest Package - $100

Full Package does not include registration fee for the NAHRO High Performance Management Seminar. PAHRA is offering a 50% Discount on Full Package Registration for Attendees of the NAHRO High Performance Management Seminar.

□ Please check here if you plan to attend the Lititz Lunch and Learn Tour on Tuesday, September 19.

DAILY SESSIONS:  □ Member - $170  □ Non-member - $200  □ Specifying date: __________________

BEST PRACTICES SHOWCASE AND AWARDS BANQUET ONLY:  □ $75 if the only events attending.

□ NAHRO High Performance Management Seminar

NAHRO Training and Materials Fee: $395  (33% discount off the typical $595 course registration fee)

PAHRA Member Discount Conference Registration Fee: $150  (50% discount off the Annual Conference registration fee)

TOTAL COST FOR SEMINAR AND CONFERENCE COMBINED: $545

Total Amount: $ ____________________________ Please copy and complete a separate form for each attendee.

Don’t forget the PAHRA Member Bonus – for each two full registrations, the third full registration is half-price!

Please contact the hotel directly for room reservations:

Lancaster Marriott at Penn Square, 25 S. Queen Street, Lancaster, PA 17603

Call 1-888-850-6146 or book online at www.lancastermarriott.com, enter PHRPHRA for single occupancy or PHDPHDA for double occupancy.

Identify yourself as a member of the Pennsylvania Association of Housing & Redevelopment Agencies group.

PAHRA Group Room Rate includes delicious hot breakfast buffet daily:

$159.00 per night single occupancy

$179.00 per night double occupancy

Reserve before 5:00 p.m. August 27, 2017 to receive PAHRA Group Room Rate.

Attendees are encouraged to email registration forms to kelly@pahra.org with payment to follow. Please copy and complete a separate form for each attendee. Please make check payable to PAHRA and mail with a copy of your completed registration form to:

PAHRA, PO Box J, New Florence, PA 15944

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Technology constantly evolves. With Infradapt, you can master the change.
Recently, I have been thinking a lot about change. As many of you know, after almost 20 years with one law firm, I made the decision to make a change. This was a long and difficult decision for me. I had been in one place for almost 20 years.

Over that period of time, our affordable housing group went from working on the first HOPE VI mixed-finance developments to representing housing authorities in over 20 states on a plethora of issues. It was time for change. It was time to expand in order to better assist housing authorities.

When I look at the affordable housing industry, I see an even bigger need for change. In the last 20 years, we have watched capital fund appropriations drop by one third. Over $1 billion has disappeared from the annual capital funds allocated to housing authorities. This drop has taken place even while the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) admits to over $20 billion of backlogged capital needs for the nation’s public housing stock.

The decrease in capital funds has led to aging buildings that require more upkeep and are more difficult to operate and maintain. HUD has responded to this growing problem by decreasing public housing operating subsidy. Over the last 20 years, housing authorities have only been allocated approximately 94 percent of their operating subsidy needs. In fact, only five times in the last 20 years has HUD met 100 percent of eligibility.

Congress has implemented a number of programs to try and rectify this funding shortfall. First, the George H. W. Bush administration tried HOPE VI. The Clinton administration followed that up with the Quality Housing Work Responsibility Act, and George W. brought us asset management. The Obama administration attempted to move forward on the idea of privatization through the Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) program. Now we have the Trump administration and a HUD Secretary, Ben Carson, who believes poverty is just “a state of mind,” according to a statement Carson made during an interview hosted by Armstrong Williams on SiriusXM’s Town Hall. So it is not yet clear what, if any, program this administration will offer.

Recently, a PBS Frontline special sensationalized flaws in the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) system and called into question whether or not private developers can be entrusted with the responsibility of providing affordable housing to our nation’s poor. Members of the Carlisle Development Group out of Florida pleaded guilty to fraud in connection with their LIHTC developments and are now serving time in “public” housing. Pinnacle Housing Group, also out of Florida, has been similarly accused and agreed to pay back millions of dollars to the federal government. More investigations are underway and additional findings are likely.

With private developers embroiled in such schemes, now is the time for housing authorities to step forward and take charge of our industry. Housing authorities can take the lead by self-developing their property. Do not let the words “tax credits” scare you. Do not let “it’s complicated” become an excuse for inaction. Congress is sending you a message. HUD is sending you a message. You have been given the necessary tools to use affiliates financed with LIHTCs combined with public housing funds, RAD and Section 8 to redevelop your housing. With private developers under fire, housing authorities can and should step up and undertake self-development. Free of the underlying profit motive, housing authorities can restore faith in the system and develop the affordable housing our country desperately needs.

Now is a time for change. Now is a time for action. Now is a time for housing authorities to take the lead.

Michael H. Syme is a partner in the Real Estate Department of Fox Rothschild LLP and focuses his practice on affordable housing and mixed-finance development. Fox Rothschild LLP (www.foxrothschild.com) is a full-service law firm of more than 800 lawyers in 22 offices coast to coast.
Governments are the core of Maher Duessel’s practice, and we have comprehensive experience serving housing authorities and HUD funded entities.

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Maher Duessel is proud to be a Friend of PAHRA Partner.

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Fox Rothschild’s affordable housing team has the detailed knowledge of affordable housing and redevelopment that comes only from experience. We’ve spent decades representing and earning the trust of public housing authorities and others whose mission is to provide safe, livable homes to low-income families.

Solid, responsive and resourceful, Fox has 800 attorneys in 22 offices, including five in Pennsylvania. That allows us to offer clients all the resources of a national firm with the local connections and personal service of a boutique.

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2017 PAUL G. PECHARKO ADULT SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS:

1st Place $3,000 Award
Makkah Davis – sponsored by Bethlehem Housing Authority

Makkah majors in Secondary Mathematics Education at Moravian College. She is a member of Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society and the Kappa Delta Pi International Honor Society in Education, who participates in the America Reads elementary school tutoring program. Makkah also volunteers for Feed the Children and at her local mosque, as well as holding a work-study position at Moravian’s Reeves Library, all while maintaining a GPA worthy of Dean’s List honors. Makkah is intrigued with the relationship between numbers and so much of what occurs in our daily lives. As a mathematics teacher, she looks forward to “awakening inquisitive minds” and “supporting the next generation of thinkers and leaders.”

2nd Place $2,000 Award
Evan Martin – sponsored by Cumberland County Housing & Redevelopment Authorities

Evan has a passion for music, which he feels has had a significant effect on shaping who he is as a person, through patience, focus and dedication to learning and improving. He is majoring in International Business at Temple University with the ultimate goal of pursuing a career as a Foreign Service Officer with the U.S. Department of State. To define his opinion of success, Evan quotes Ralph Waldo Emerson, “To leave the world a bit better, whether by a healthy child, a garden patch or a redeemed social condition; to know even one life has breathed easier because you have lived. This is to have succeeded.”

3rd Place $1,000 Award
Liana Garcia – sponsored by Lancaster City Housing Authority

A single mother of five, Liana currently juggles parenting, a full-time course load and a job while maintaining a 4.0 GPA. She is studying to become a Registered Nurse, followed by a Bachelor’s degree and ultimately a Master’s of Science in Nursing, specializing in pediatrics. After becoming pregnant during her first year of college, she states that dropping out was one of life’s hardest lessons. However, she adds, “As motivation, eight years and four more children later, I’ve gained the self-esteem and belief in myself to start fresh and not only give myself a better future, but also for the five small people who are counting on me.”

3rd Place $1,000 Award
April Zack – sponsored by Housing Authority of Indiana County

April will be attending Indiana University of Pennsylvania in the fall to pursue her goal of becoming a Registered Nurse, continuing the nursing studies she began at Indiana County Technology Center. She has maintained a place on the Distinguished Honor Roll throughout high school, is a member of the National Honor Society and the National Technical Honor Society, received several Principal Stars, as well as Challenger Program Awards for academic excellence. April’s younger brother, diagnosed with autism at an early age, has been both an inspiration and her motivation to become a pediatric nurse, where she hopes “to be able to help kids overcome their difficulties” and make a “serious impact on their future lives.”
2nd Place $2,000 Award
Jonathan Blichar – sponsored by Carbon County Housing Authority

Class valedictorian with a 4.3 GPA, Jonathan is the true definition of “scholar-athlete”. He serves as Class President, is a member of National Honor Society, a state qualifier for Future Business Leaders of America, and a tutor, with other extracurricular activities including: golf team, track and field, Environmental Club, Magic Club, and International Travelers Club. Jonathan hopes to study either Biomedical or Aerospace Engineering, and he believes, “You can achieve anything you set your mind to with hard work and dedication.” He wants to inspire others to end the cycle of poverty. In his words, “I want to be the voice telling them to use their unfortunate situation in a positive way by not letting poverty keep you down, but lift you up and make you stronger.”

3rd Place $1,000 Award
Gabriella Greenhoward – sponsored by Bethlehem Housing Authority

Gabriella boasts an outstanding 4.4 GPA, is a member of National Honor Society, National Society of High School Scholars, participates in the Aevidum tutoring program, and the tennis team in addition to many other civic and volunteer activities. Serving as Editor-in-Chief of her school’s award-winning newspaper, she also pens an advice column “Ask Gabi”. With her family displaced by Hurricane Sandy, Gabriella has adjusted well to become what others describe as “highly motivated, with a strong leadership ability and desire for excellence”. As a black, Latina woman, Gabriella hopes to use those traits to “help break down all the predispositions and stereotypes” by achieving success and contentment. She concludes, “Contrary to common belief, success is not about perfection, it’s about taking pride in what [one is] able to achieve.”

PAHRA wishes each of our scholarship recipients continued success and we hope that these awards will assist them in pursuing their dreams with purpose and passion.

Affordable Housing and Community Development

Housing agencies, nonprofits, developers, lenders, owners, syndicators, investors and others rely on our experience with federal housing programs and related matters. Our team of more than 20 affordable housing lawyers are veterans of HUD, housing authorities, Fannie Mae, the IRS, state and local agencies, and Congressional committees.
PAHRA is extremely pleased to announce that FHLBank Pittsburgh has provided a $5,000 corporate contribution to the PAHRA Scholarship Fund. 2017 marks the 30th year that PAHRA has awarded scholarships to deserving high school seniors, as well as adults pursuing higher education, who reside in subsidized or affordable housing, or a redevelopment area.

The purpose of PAHRA’s scholarship program is to encourage higher education, develop self-sufficiency and increase self-esteem among these residents. A total of $12,000 was awarded this year to reward academic excellence, as well as involvement in extracurricular, civic and community activities. The recipients of PAHRA scholarships have compelling stories, coupled with the drive to overcome adversity in order to accomplish their goals.

PAHRA is grateful to have the opportunity to assist these very deserving individuals, and appreciates the support of partners such as FHLBank Pittsburgh to help carry on the tradition.

Need a loan for your housing project?

Contact an FHLBank Pittsburgh member institution and ask about low-cost lending for affordable housing through the Community Lending Program. Find a member near you at www.fhlb-pgh.com.
The 2017 PAHRA Spring Conference & Expo was held at Seven Springs Mountain Resort in early June. Sponsored by the Housing and Redevelopment Insurance Exchange (HARIE), co-sponsored by Honeywell, the event drew nearly 250 attendees, including 60 vendor representatives manning 35 booths. New this year, each exhibitor was provided the opportunity to introduce themselves, their products and services with a “Drop The Mic Moment”.

PAHRA President Senghor Manns, joined by conference host Mike Washowich, Executive Director of Westmoreland County Housing Authority, welcomed participants to our meeting on the mountain.

Highlights of an agenda packed with professional development opportunities included:

- HUD Listening Sessions provided by HUD Deputy Assistant Secretary Donald J. LaVoy and his team regarding PHAS – SEMAP – SEPHAS – PIC-NG – and UPCS-V
- Zoning Clinic presented by Penn State Extension – Community Development Division
- Landlord/Resident Relations Workshop
- Health, Safety, and Risk Reduction Series
- Identifying Hazards for Equipment and Property Loss Control
- Substance Use and Medication Misuse in Seniors
- An Interactive Dementia LIVE! Experience
- Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) Update
- Comprehensive Bed Bug Educational Seminar
- Our Ever-Popular Maintenance / Management Roundtable
- Show Me the Money – Robust Funding Sources and Financing Tools
- Applicability of the Pennsylvania Prevailing Wage Act
- SOAR – Social Security Outreach, Access and Recovery

Also presenting interesting and informative training on timely topics were:
- PAHousingSearch.com Online Housing Listing and Locator Service
- Hartford Steam Boiler Insurance and Inspection Company
- U-Comp & Group Business Programs
- Western PA Governor’s Action Team
- POWER – Partnerships for Opportunity and Workforce and Economic Revitalization

Plenty of important networking opportunities were offered:
- Extended breakfasts, luncheon buffet and refreshment breaks to interact with exhibitors
- Cornhole Tournament Scholarship Fund Raiser, sponsored by Horizon Information Systems, where competition was friendly yet fierce, but not as nail-bitingly intense as the Penguin play-off game, which drew Pittsburgh hockey fans to the Matterhorn
- Country barbeque, a delectably delicious PAHRA tradition

Regret missing this excellent event? Then plan to join us at the Annual Conference – Best Practices Showcase and Awards to be held at Lancaster Marriott at Penn Square. Conference registration materials and hotel information are provided within this edition of the Monitor. We hope to see you there!
The following companies and organizations exhibited at the 2017 PAHRA Spring Conference & Expo. We hope that you took the time to get acquainted. When you are in the market for related products and services, please consider purchasing from or contracting with those who support PAHRA.

Affordable Housing Accountants, Ltd.
Always Safe Sidewalks
American HealthCare Group
Bitting Recreation
Chrislynn Energy Services, Inc.
Chute Master Environmental, Inc.
Comcast – Internet Essentials
CSC ServiceWorks
Duncan Financial Group
The EADS Group
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Senior LIFE
Tenmast Software
U-Comp & Group Business Programs
USDA Rural Development
YARDI Systems

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!
2018 Joint PAHRA/MARC NAHRO Spring Conference & Expo
June 24-27, 2018   Hershey Lodge, Hershey, PA
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