



As we all see spring on the horizon, the NAHRO team is busy preparing for the *NAHRO 2019 Washington Conference* and one key item we are prepping is the *2019 Legislative and Regulatory Agenda*. The agenda lays out NAHRO priorities in detail including HUD and Treasury department programs. We are still finalizing the *2019 Legislative and Regulatory Agenda* and electronic and hard-copies will be available at the *NAHRO 2019 Washington Conference*. Keep an eye on www.nahro.org/2019agenda - we will post the 2019 Legislative and Regulatory Agenda there and this NAHRO Priority document is posted there now.

In order to assist our Regional, State, and Chapter members in preparing for their Congressional visits during the *NAHRO 2019 Washington Conference*, we have developed this NAHRO Priority document. This document is not intended to catalogue all the priorities that NAHRO will actively pursue in 2019 but provides our members with NAHRO priorities so our Regional, State, and Chapter members can coordinate their priorities. There are many issues - including ones that may rise in priority as federal policymakers act over the course of the year - that will feature prominently in NAHRO's efforts on behalf of its members and the communities they serve. New and updated information will be available through the NAHRO blog, www.NAHROBlog.org, and to members through Direct News messages and our newsletter, the NAHRO Monitor.

In preparing for your trip to the *NAHRO 2019 Washington Conference*, if you need any assistance scheduling Congressional visits contact Tess Hembree, NAHRO's Director of Congressional Relations at THembree@nahro.org. To discuss specific policies and programs contact Georgi Banna, NAHRO's Director of Policy and Program Development at GBanna@nahro.org.

Additional information and to register for the *NAHRO 2019 Washington Conference* can be found at www.nahro.org/washingtonconference.

NAHRO Priorities

Keep the Government Open for Efficient and Effective Program Operations

Congress and the Administration must maintain their federal commitment to housing assistance and community development by prioritizing the appropriations process to ensure that portions of the federal government, including HUD, do not shut down and can deploy housing and community development funding.

- For PHAs to successfully be the nation's champion for creating opportunities, Congress must maintain regular order, pass appropriations bills on time and avoid government shutdowns in the future.
- NAHRO will continue to advocate for fully funded HUD program appropriations through on-time, regular Congressional order.

Fully Fund Affordable Housing and Community Development Programs

Congress should provide full funding of affordable housing and community development programs to maximize the potential of all Americans and meet the needs of the nation's communities. NAHRO commits to do the following:

- Advocate to restore full funding for the operating costs and annual capital accrual needs of public housing.
- Advocate to restore full funding for the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program and the program's administrative fees in the FY 2020 budget.
- Advocate to separately fund and expand the Mobility Demonstration Program, which provides funding and regulatory flexibilities to public housing agencies (PHAs) that wish to voluntarily set up a mobility program.
- Advocate for a responsible level of funding for the renewal of Section 8 multi-family project-based rental assistance (PBRA) contracts.
- Protect funding for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG).
- Protect the HOME Investment Partnerships programs from devastating funding cuts and advocate restoring the program funding to former baseline levels.
- Support the full capitalization and implementation of the Housing Trust Fund (HTF) fund.
- Support full funding of homeless assistance programs.

Preserve and Develop the Nation's Housing Stock

NAHRO's members work hard to use their housing programs and policies to create opportunities for families, elderly, and disabled. These resources are precious, and we must work to preserve existing and develop new affordable housing options for low-income Americans. Severe housing problems are on the rise and given high demand and relatively low construction rates, the rental vacancy rate is at a 30-year low, further exacerbating the demand for affordable housing. To counter this lack of housing stock, NAHRO commits to do the following:

- Support the implementation of effective tools and appropriate oversight to improve the operation of the public housing program.
- Ensure that every PHA that wishes to convert from public housing to the Section 8 platform through the Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) program can.
- Support legislation that strengthens the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC).
- Advocate for the swift implementation of Opportunity Zones to expand the nation's affordable housing stock.

Create Local, Community-Based Solutions

NAHRO members understand the complex and unique circumstances facing their communities, however, Congress often prescribes top-down approaches to housing and community development agencies trying to solve local issues. This makes it difficult for PHAs and LRAs to make decisions that reflect and benefit their specific local circumstances. PHAs need more authority to do what is best for their community. NAHRO commits to do the following:

- Support legislation and rule-making that eliminates overly burdensome requirements on small housing agencies.
- Oppose any mandatory consolidation of agencies' Housing Choice Voucher programs.
- Support housing agencies as Performance-Based Contract Administrators. Housing agencies--as practitioners of affordable housing--are best equipped to administer these contracts.
- Advocate for unit inspection protocols for Public Housing and the Housing Choice Voucher program to strike the appropriate balance between ensuring safe, decent, and sanitary housing, while still balancing PHA time and administrative concerns.
- Support the swift implementation of the Moving to Work Expansion which will increase the number of agencies that have the Moving to Work designation from 39 to 139.
- Ensure Small Agencies that receive Moving to Work status receive the proper technical assistance from HUD.
- Ensure that any expansion of the Moving to Work program maintains and expands the local control and flexibility of the current Moving to Work program, except to the extent required by the new statutory language authorizing the expansion.

Support Efficient Program Operation

In a climate characterized by fiscal constraints, it is more important than ever for HUD and other federal agencies to function efficiently and effectively by helping their partners to maximize use of federal resources through sensible program design and regulation. The lapse in federal appropriations during December 2018 and January 2019 put a spotlight on the importance of having local control and access to program reserve funds without HUD intervention. NAHRO commits to do the following:

- Support streamlined program operations for Small Agencies.
- Promote measures to simplify the operating environment of the public housing program.
- Advocate for HUD to continue to treat the Annual Contributions Contract (ACC) as a bilateral agreement, as it has for decades.
- Support giving PHAs the ability to draw from Housing Assistance Payments (HAP) reserves to fund the administrative fee account, when those fees are not high enough to adequately run the program. Allow PHAs to use HAP to fund resident services and cover administrative costs related to mobility purposes.
- Insist on swift regulatory implementation of the Housing Opportunity Through Modernization Act of 2016 (HOTMA) provisions.
- Ensure federal housing and community development dollars are not held hostage by unrelated policies outside of HCD programs.
- Work to address the negative impact recent regulatory reforms in HOME have had on the ability of PHAs and LRAs to fully engage in the program.
- Support effective HOME program administration by advocating for the elimination of the burdensome statutory 24-month commitment of funds requirement.
- Improve access to homeless assistance programs (Continuum of Care, Emergency Solution Grants, Rapid Re-Housing) to better position housing and community development agencies as full partners.
- Promulgate adequate and responsible regulations for the Opportunity Zones program with appropriate oversight and debt collection to ensure Opportunity Funds support low-income communities.
- Advocate for the quick implementation of the Small Agency regulatory relief provisions and the Family Self-Sufficiency provisions of the *Economic Growth, Regulatory Relief, and Consumer Protection Act* (previously known as S. 2155).
- Educate decisionmakers in Congress and at HUD about the drawbacks of instituting cash management protocols, as evidenced during the December 2018/January 2019 lapse in Federal appropriations, in the Public Housing program.

NAHRO Priorities By Program

Public Housing

- Advocate to restore full funding through regular Congressional order for the operating costs and annual capital accrual needs of public housing.
- Support the implementation of effective tools and appropriate oversight to improve the operation of the public housing program.
- Promote measures to streamline the operating environment.
- Ensure every agency can convert through RAD that wants to.
- HUD must work with PHAs to ensure the incredibly important, effective, and successful work of the FSS Program is maximized and measured using fair and locally tailored metrics.
- Educate about the drawbacks of instituting cash management protocols in the Public Housing Program, as evidenced during the December 2018/January 2019 lapse in Federal appropriations.

Housing Choice Vouchers (HCV)

- Support full funding for the Housing Choice Voucher Program and the program's administrative fees in the FY 2020 budget.
- Support giving PHAs the ability to draw from HAP reserves to fund the administrative fee account, when those fees are not high enough to adequately run the program. Allow PHAs to use HAP to fund resident services and cover administrative costs related to mobility purposes.
- HUD must work with PHAs to ensure the incredibly important, effective, and successful work of the FSS Program is

maximized and measured using fair and locally tailored metrics.

- Fully fund and expand the Mobility Demonstration Program, which provides funding and regulatory flexibilities to PHAs that wish to voluntarily set up a mobility program.
- Insist on swift regulatory implementation of HOTMA provisions.
- Oppose any mandatory consolidation of the Housing Choice Voucher Program.

Project-Based Rental Assistance (PBRA)

- Advocate for a responsible level of funding for the renewal of Section 8 multi-family project-based rental assistance (PBRA) contracts.
- Support housing agencies as Performance-Based Contract Administrators (PBCA).

Moving to Work (MTW)

- Support the swift implementation of the Moving to Work Expansion which will increase the number of agencies that have the Moving to Work designation from 39 to 139.
- Ensure Small Agencies that receive Moving to Work status receive the proper technical assistance from HUD.
- Ensure that any expansion of the Moving to Work program maintains and expands the local control and flexibility of the current Moving to Work program, except to the extent required by the new statutory language authorizing the expansion.

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)

- Protect and increase funding for CDBG.
- Ensure federal housing and community development dollars are not held hostage by unrelated policies outside of HCD programs.

HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME)

- Protect HOME from devastating funding cuts and advocate to increase program funding.
- Work to address the negative impact recent regulatory reforms have had on the ability of PHAs and LRAs to fully engage in the program.
- Support effective program administration by advocating the elimination of the burdensome statutory 24-month commitment of funds requirement.

Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC)

- Support legislation that strengthens and expands LIHTC.

Housing Trust Fund (HTF)

- Support the full capitalization and implementation of the fund.

Homeless Assistance Grants

- Support full funding of homeless assistance programs.
- Improve access to homeless assistance programs (Continuum of Care, Emergency Solution Grants, Rapid Re-Housing) to better position housing and community development agencies as full partners.

Opportunity Zones

- Promulgate adequate and responsible regulations for the program with appropriate oversight and data collection to ensure Opportunity Funds support low-income communities and incorporate public housing authorities as a resource.

Policy and Legislative Contact Information

Georgi Banna, Esq.

Director of Policy and Program Development

GBanna@nahro.org

202-580-7234

Tess Hembree

Director of Congressional Relations

THembree@nahro.org

202-580-7225

Eric Oberdorfer

Policy Advisor

EOberdorfer@nahro.org

202-580-7223

Tushar Gurjal

Policy Analyst

TGurjal@nahro.org

202-580-7216

www.NAHRO.org

www.NAHROBlog.org