

## **FEDERAL POLICY PRIORITIES, 2026**

### **1. Ensure the continued operation of HUD programs by protecting congressionally appropriated funding and adequately staffing HUD offices.**

Since last year, over 24% of HUD staff have left the department, leaving remaining workers at capacity and threatening their ability to carry out core functions efficiently and effectively.

Consistent, reliable funding and adequate staffing are minimum requirements for HUD to administer federal housing, community development, and homelessness resources to states and local governments,

Without access to HUD assistance – whether because of frozen funding or because there are not enough HUD staff to administer programs – shelters would be forced to close their doors, communities would stop construction on new projects to build housing and community centers, households receiving rental assistance would face immediate rent increases and potential evictions, and communities, families and small businesses impacted by disasters would be unable to rebuild.

### **2. Support the highest level of funding possible in fiscal year (FY) 2027.**

Lawmakers finalized their fiscal year (FY) 2026 spending bill for HUD programs in early February, providing \$77.3 billion for HUD programs – an over \$7.2 billion increase from the previous fiscal year! Thank you.

Ensure the highest possible funding levels in FY27, including:

- Full funding to renew all existing Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) contracts, plus funding to expand the program to an additional 250,000 households as a down payment on affordability to match the recent expansion of the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC).
- Full funding for HUD's Homeless Assistance Grants program to address the needs of people experiencing homelessness.
- Increased funding for public housing operations and repairs.
- Increased investments in programs that support the construction and preservation of deeply affordable, accessible housing, including Section 811 Housing for Persons with Disabilities, Section 202 Housing for the Elderly, and Project-Based Rental Assistance (PBRA).
- Maintained funding for HUD's Eviction Prevention Grant Program (EPGP).
- Increased funding for HOME and housing counseling.

### **3. Oppose harmful policies that restrict access to housing assistance.**

Oppose new barriers to housing assistance that would leave even more people at risk of housing insecurity and homelessness. The Trump administration has or will soon release harmful new regulations that limit access to HUD-assisted housing and homelessness services and make it more difficult for currently assisted families to remain in their homes:

- **“Mixed-Status” Rule:** A proposed change to HUD’s longstanding “mixed-status” rule would force families with “mixed” immigration status – families in which at least one member is either a US citizen or an immigrant with HUD-eligible immigration status, and at least one member is not – to either separate or give up their assistance, putting them at risk of missed rent, eviction, and in worst cases, homelessness.
- **Work Requirements and Time Limits on HUD-Assisted Households:** A forthcoming proposed rule would give Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) and HUD-assisted housing providers the ability to implement work requirements and time limits on households receiving HUD assistance. It could open the door for state legislatures to require PHAs in their states to adopt these harmful practices.
- **30-Day Eviction Notice Requirement for Public Housing and PBRA Tenants:** HUD is expected to release a proposed rule that would rescind the 2024 HUD rule imposing a 30-day notice requirement for families facing eviction for nonpayment of rent who are living in public housing or housing supported by project-based rental assistance (PBRA) programs.
- **Equal Access Rule:** HUD Secretary Scott Turner announced in February 2025 that HUD would no longer enforce its 2016 Equal Access Rule, which requires housing, facilities, and services funded through HUD’s Office of Community Planning and Development (CPD) to ensure equal access to programs for individuals based on their gender identity without intrusive questioning or being asked to provide documentation.

Imposing new time limits or work requirements will not create well-paying jobs and opportunities for financial security; evicting households with mixed immigration status will not address the underlying systemic causes of our housing crisis; and denying trans people access to appropriate shelter and services will not create additional resources for our strained homelessness system. Rather, these proposals will only make housing insecurity and homelessness worse by cutting off access to needed assistance.

#### **4. Oppose policies that undermine proven solutions to homelessness.**

Advocates should encourage their members of Congress to oppose efforts to undermine proven, effective solutions to homelessness.

The evidence is clear: housing with voluntary supportive services is the most effective way to end homelessness.

Providing low-barrier housing and tailored services to meet the unique needs of people – including youth and older adults, families, people experiencing chronic homelessness, individuals with substance use disorder, and people with mental health conditions – is an effective and cost-effective way of ending homelessness. Low-barrier housing provides people experiencing homelessness with the stability they need to effectively utilize services and achieve long-term goals, including recovery, family reunification, employment, continued education, and financial stability.

Housing with voluntary supportive services has been key to reducing veteran homelessness by 50% over the last decade.

HCDNNJ opposes harmful proposals that would undermine proven solutions to homelessness, upend decades of best practice, and potentially cost people who had previously been experiencing homelessness their assistance, including:

- Potentially harmful changes HUD's Continuum of Care (CoC) Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for FY 2026. Last year, HUD released a CoC NOFO for FY25 that would have made drastic changes to how communities can use federal dollars to respond to the needs of people experiencing homelessness. While this NOFO was challenged in court and ultimately rescinded, it is likely the administration will try to make similar changes in its FY26 NOFO.
- The Housing PLUS Act (HR 5618 in the 119th Congress) from Representative Andy Barr (R-KY) would force HUD to divert funds away from successful local programs to outdated, ineffective, and costly strategies used by the federal government decades ago before bipartisan members of congress demanded better outcomes and greater accountability for homelessness spending.

## 5. BIPARTISAN LEGISLATIVE OPPORTUNITIES

ROAD to Housing Act (S.2651) – Sens. Scott (R-SC) and Warren (D-MA). The “ROAD to Housing Act” includes 40 provisions covering financial literacy, housing supply, manufactured housing, homeownership, program reform, veterans’ housing, and oversight and coordination of housing programs and agencies. It includes several provisions NLIHC supports:

Housing for the 21st Century Act (H.R.6644) – Reps. Hill (R-AR), Waters (D-CA), Flood (R-NE), and Cleaver (D-MO). The “Housing for the 21st Century Act” includes 27 provisions related to streamlining local, state, and federal processes; reforming federal programs, including the HOME Investment Partnership program, Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, and Rural Housing Service (RHS) programs; manufactured housing; veterans’ access to housing; housing counseling; rental housing for elderly and disabled residents; and federal program oversight.

Eviction Crisis Act, Stable Families Act (H.R.8327 in the 117th Congress) – Sens. Bennet (D-CO) and Young (R-IN) and Rep. Torres (D-NY). This bill creates a permanent program to provide emergency rental assistance (ERA) and housing stability services to renters facing temporary financial setbacks that put them at risk of housing instability, eviction, and homelessness. The bill builds on the success of the state and local ERA programs that have helped reduce eviction filings and keep households stably housed.

Family Stability and Opportunity Vouchers Act (S.1257, H.R.3776 in the 118th Congress) – Sens. Van Hollen (D-MD) and Young (R-IN) and Reps. Neguse (D-CO) and Fitzpatrick (R-PA). This bipartisan bill provides 250,000 new housing vouchers and mobility counseling services to families with young children, helping them move to safe, affordable housing in communities of their choice, including areas connected to well-performing schools, well-paying jobs, healthcare services, and transit.

Fixing Emergency Management for Americans (FEMA) Act (H.R.4669) – Reps. Graves (R-MO) and Larsen (D-WA). The bill restores the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s (FEMA) status as an independent agency outside of the Department of

Homeland Security (DHS) and implements a host of improvements that will help the agency respond faster, fairer, and with increased flexibility to the needs of all disaster survivors across the country.

Reforming Disaster Recovery Act (H.R.3702; S.1686 in the 118th Congress) – Sens. Schatz (D-HI) and Collins (R-ME), and Rep. Green (D-TX). The bill permanently authorizes the Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) program and provides important safeguards and tools to ensure disaster recovery efforts reach the lowest-income and most marginalized disaster survivors.

To find data on the housing needs of your Congressional district - [Congressional-District-Housing-Profile-NJ.pdf](#)

To find more information on local housing needs go Out of Reach report – put link from our website.