



NATIONAL LOW INCOME  
HOUSING COALITION

# **Advocacy 101: How to Engage your Elected Officials on Housing Solutions**

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September 28, 2022

# Agenda



- NLIHC Mission
- The GAP & Out of Reach highlights
  - Texas highlights
- The Budget Process
- Advocacy
- NLIHC Policy Priorities
- Q&A

# Mission



The National Low Income Housing Coalition is dedicated to achieving racially and socially equitable public policy that ensures people with the lowest incomes have quality homes that are accessible and affordable in communities of their choice.

# The National Low Income Housing Coalition



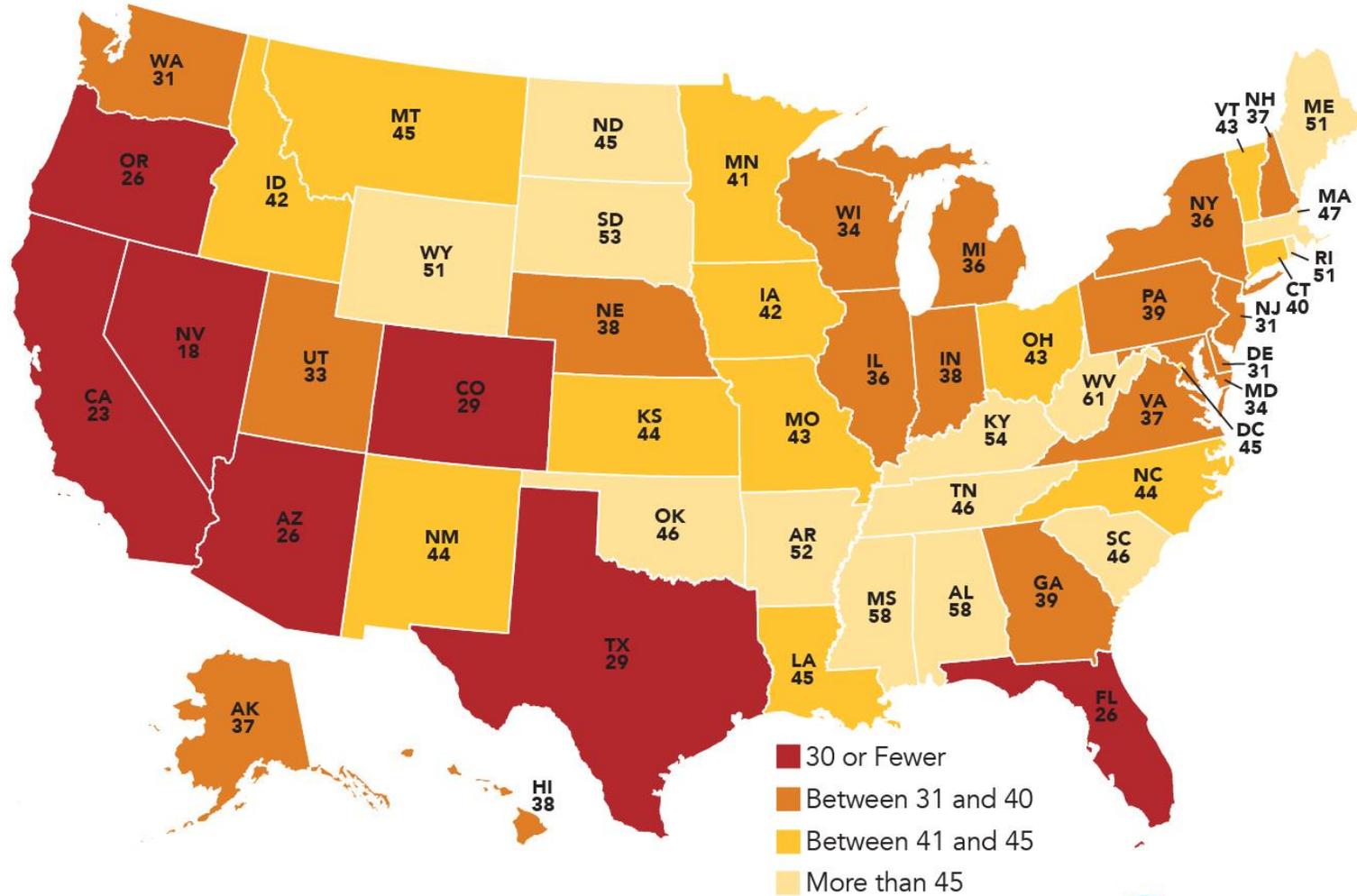
- Homeless service providers
- Landlords
- Developers
- Housing policy advocates
- Elected officials and staff

- Housing Authorities
- Other service providers
- Low-income residents
- Other sectors

# The GAP & Out of Reach highlights

# THE GAP

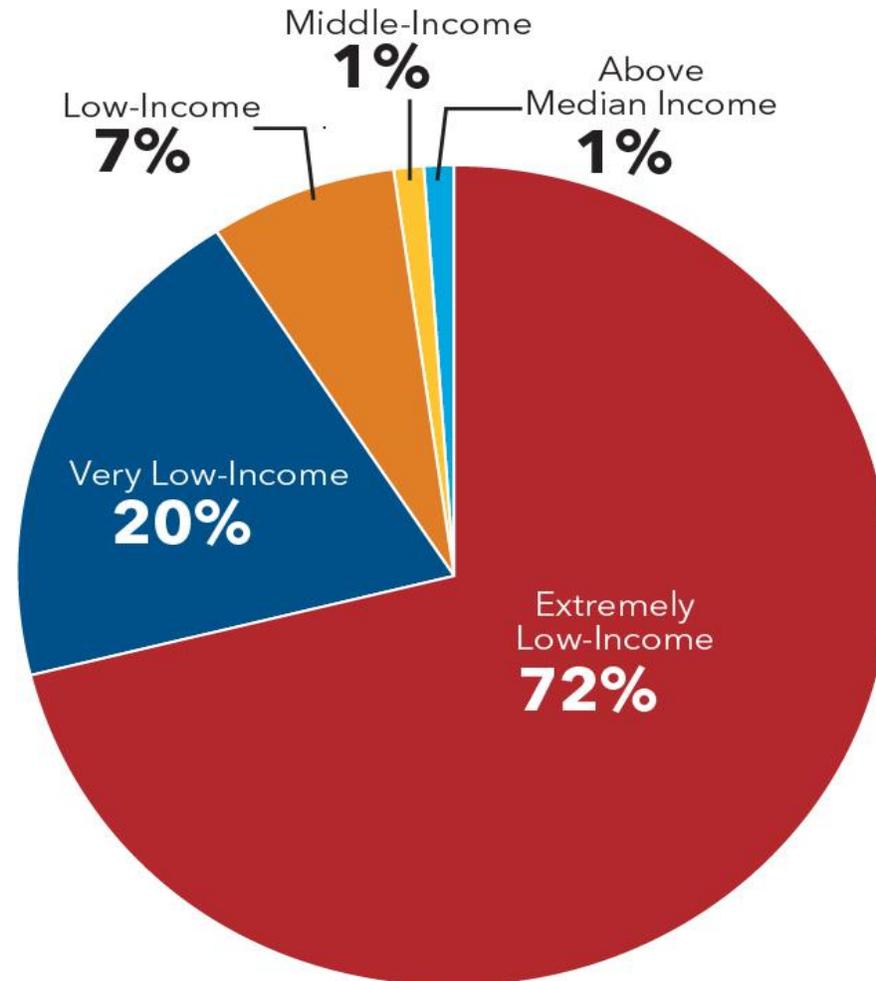
## RENTAL HOMES AFFORDABLE AND AVAILABLE PER 100 EXTREMELY LOW-INCOME RENTER HOUSEHOLDS BY STATE



Note: Extremely low-income (ELI) renter households have incomes at or below the poverty level or 30% of the area median income. Source: NLIHC tabulations of 2020 5-Year ACS PUMS Data. ©2022 National Low Income Housing Coalition

# THE GAP

## SEVERELY HOUSING COST-BURDENED RENTERS BY INCOME

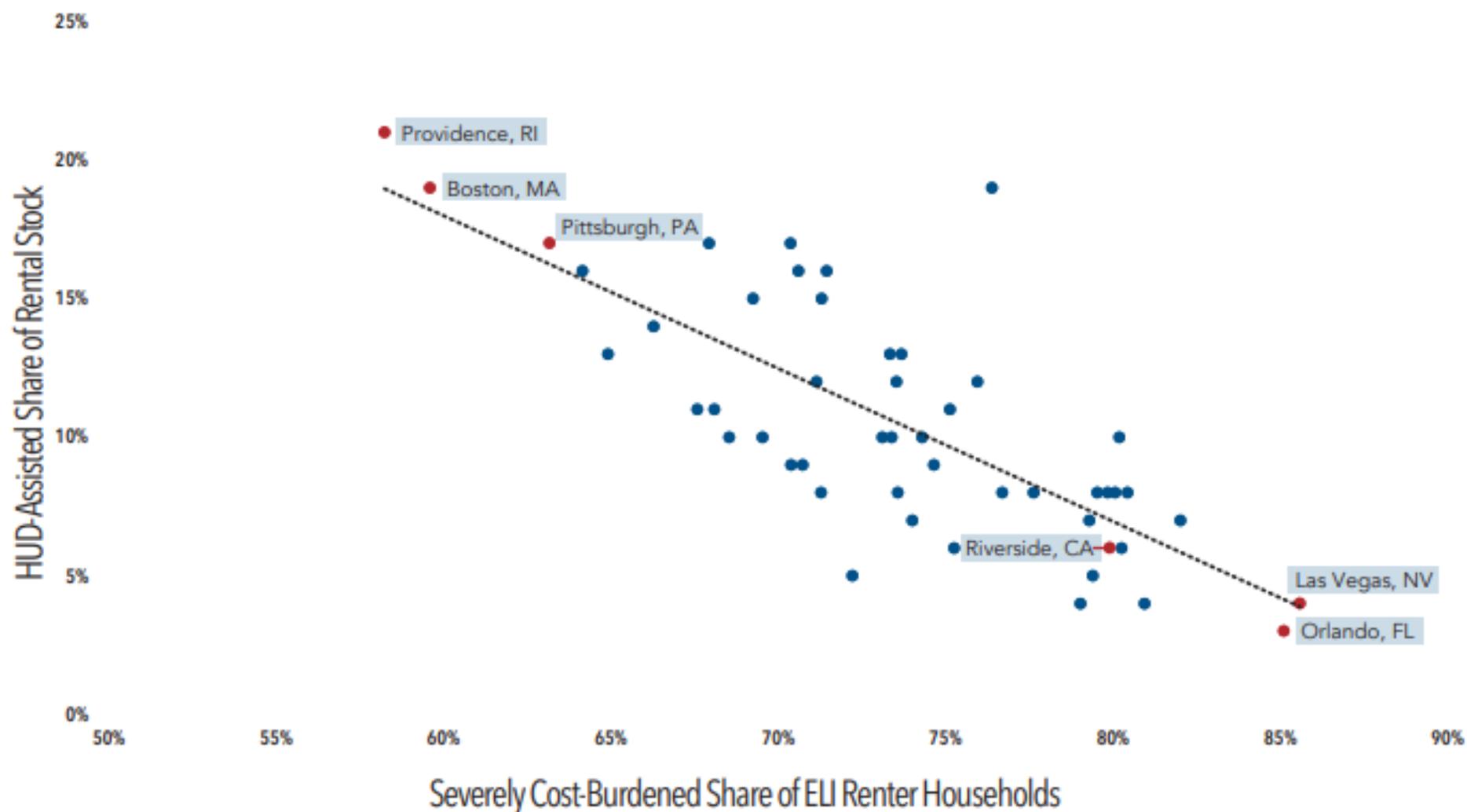


AMI = Area Median Income.  
Source: NLIHC tabulations of 2020 5-Year ACS PUMS data. ©2022 National Low Income Housing Coalition

<https://nlihc.org/gap>

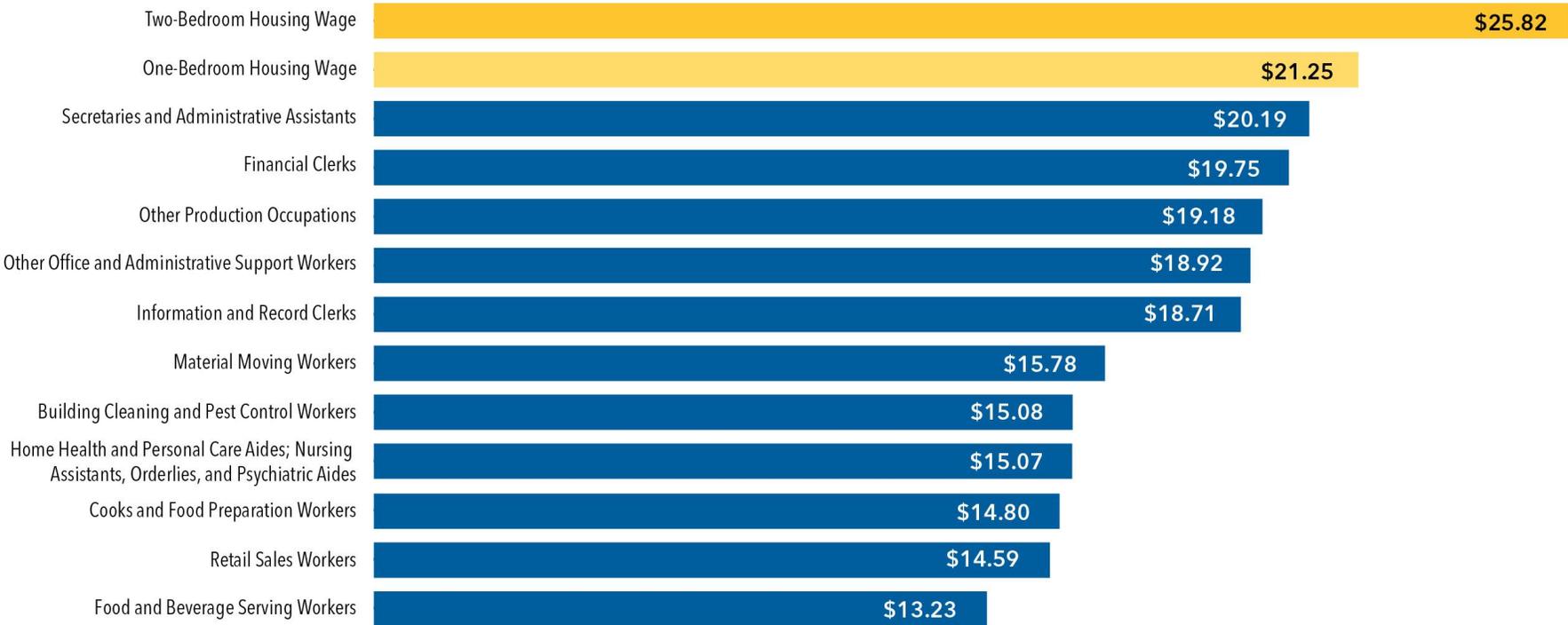


FIGURE 8: HUD-ASSISTED SHARE OF RENTAL STOCK AND SHARE OF SEVERELY COST-BURDENED RENTER HOUSEHOLDS IN TOP 50 METROS



Source: NLIHC tabulations of 2020 5-Year ACS PUMS and HUD Picture of Subsidized Households (POSH) data.

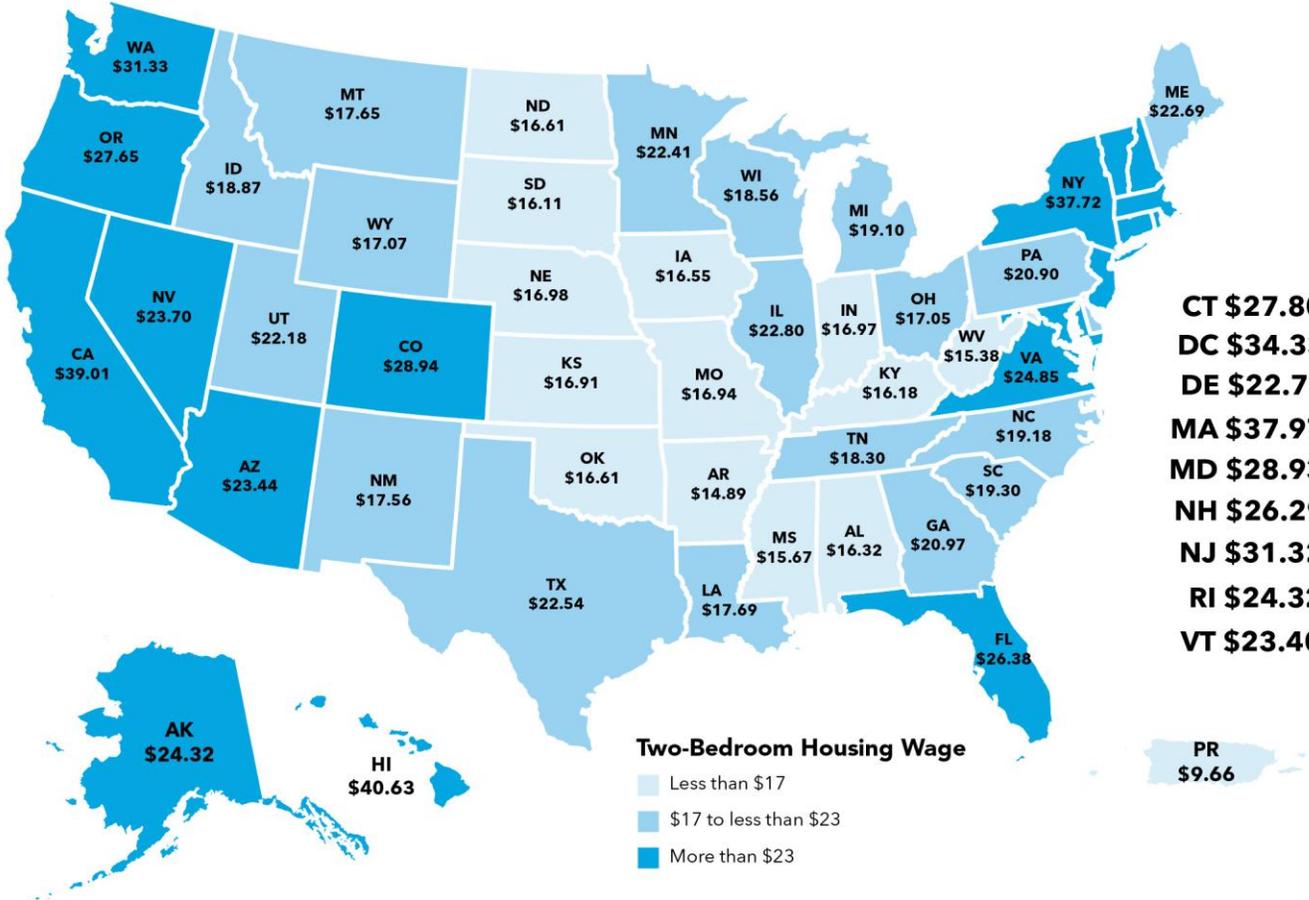
# ELEVEN OF THE TWENTY-FIVE LARGEST OCCUPATIONS IN THE UNITED STATES PAY LESS THAN THE HOUSING WAGE



Source: Occupational wages from May 2021 Occupational Employment Statistics, BLS, adjusted to 2022 dollars. Housing wages based on HUD fair market rents.



# 2022 TWO-BEDROOM RENTAL HOUSING WAGES



\*Note: New England states are displayed with HUD Fair Market Rent Areas. All other states are displayed at the county level. This map does not account for sub-county jurisdictions with minimum wages higher than the prevailing county, state, or federal minimum wage. No local minimum wages are sufficient to afford a one-bedroom rental home at the Fair Market Rent with a 40 hour work week. The geographic variation of Oregon and New York's state minimum wages are reflected at the county level.

# Texas highlights

**867,042**  
OR  
**23%**

Renter households that are extremely low income

**-614,487**

Shortage of rental homes affordable and available for extremely low income renters

**\$26,200**

Maximum income for 4-person extremely low income household (state level)

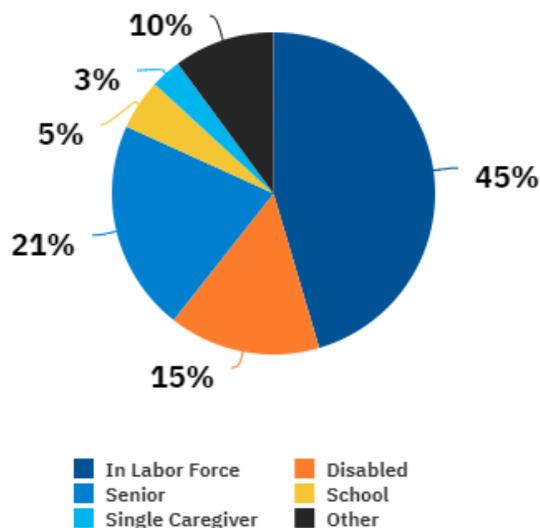
**\$46,889**

Annual household income needed to afford a two-bedroom rental home at HUD's Fair Market Rent.

**74%**

Percent of extremely low income renter households with severe cost burden

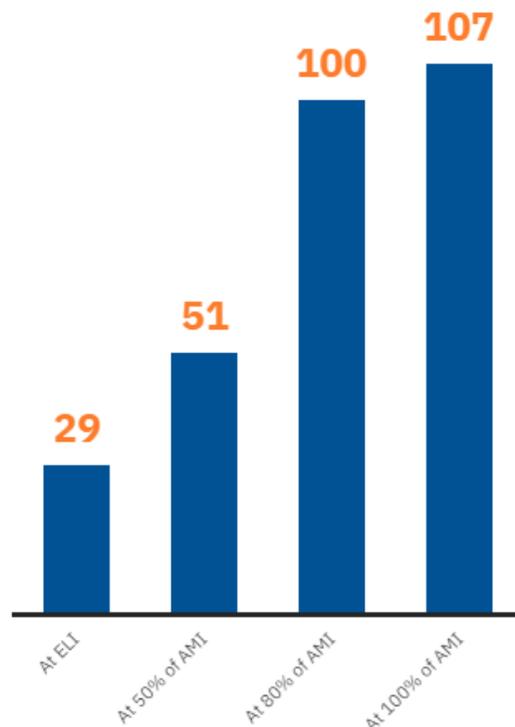
**EXTREMELY LOW INCOME RENTER HOUSEHOLDS**



**Note:** Mutually exclusive categories applied in the following order: senior, disabled, in labor force, enrolled in school, single adult caregiver of a child under 7 or a person with a disability, and other. At the national level, 15% percent of extremely low income renter households include a single adult caregiver, more than half of whom usually work more than 20 hours per week. Eleven percent of extremely low-income renter households are enrolled in school, 48% of whom usually work more than 20 hours per week.

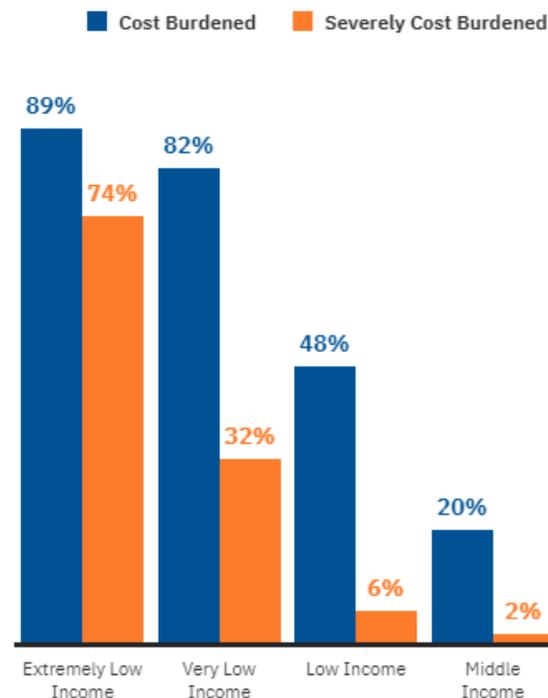
Source: 2020 5-Year ACS PUMS

**AFFORDABLE AND AVAILABLE HOMES PER 100 RENTER HOUSEHOLDS**



Source: NLIHC tabulations of 2020 5-Year ACS PUMS

**HOUSING COST BURDEN BY INCOME GROUP**



**Note:** Renter households spending more than 30% of their income on housing costs and utilities are cost burdened; those spending more than half of their income are severely cost burdened.

Source: NLIHC tabulations of 2020 5-Year ACS PUMS

#23

Texas



View State Map

SELECT  
STATE:

Select a state...

## State Facts

MINIMUM WAGE	<b>\$7.25</b>
2-BEDROOM HOUSING WAGE	<b>\$22.54</b>
NUMBER OF RENTER HOUSEHOLDS	<b>3,737,262</b>
NUMBER OF RENTER HOUSEHOLDS BELOW 30% AMI	<b>867,042</b>
PERCENT OF RENTER HOUSEHOLDS BELOW 30% AMI	<b>23%</b>
NUMBER OF RENTER HOUSEHOLDS BELOW 50% AMI	<b>1,417,499</b>
PERCENT OF RENTER HOUSEHOLDS BELOW 50% AMI	<b>38%</b>

## Affordable Rent for Low Income Households

### Minimum Wage Worker

**\$377/mo**

### Household at 30% of Area Median Income

**\$648/mo**

### Household at 50% of Area Median Income

**\$1,081/mo**

## Fair Market Rent

### 1-Bedroom Fair Market Rent

**\$977/mo**

### 2-Bedroom Fair Market Rent

**\$1,172/mo**

Working at minimum wage

**\$7.25/hr**

Each week you have to work

**104 HOURS**

To afford a modest 1 bedroom rental home at Fair Market Rent

DOWNLOAD STATE REPORT

CONNECT TO NETWORK  
Texas

**Questions?**

# The Budget Process

# Mandatory vs. Discretionary Spending



## Mandatory Spending:

- Does not take place through appropriations legislation
- Automatically devoted to large entitlement programs like Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid

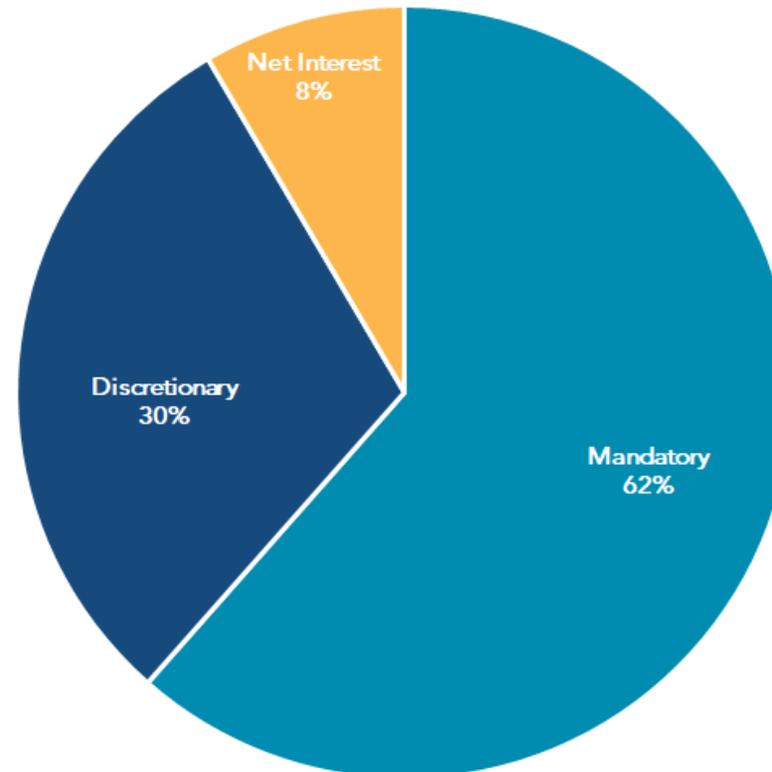
## Discretionary Spending:

- Subject to the appropriations process, Congress sets a new funding level each fiscal year starting Oct 1st
- Covers programs in an appropriations bill such as housing and education programs (examples of housing program)

# Mandatory vs. Discretionary Spending

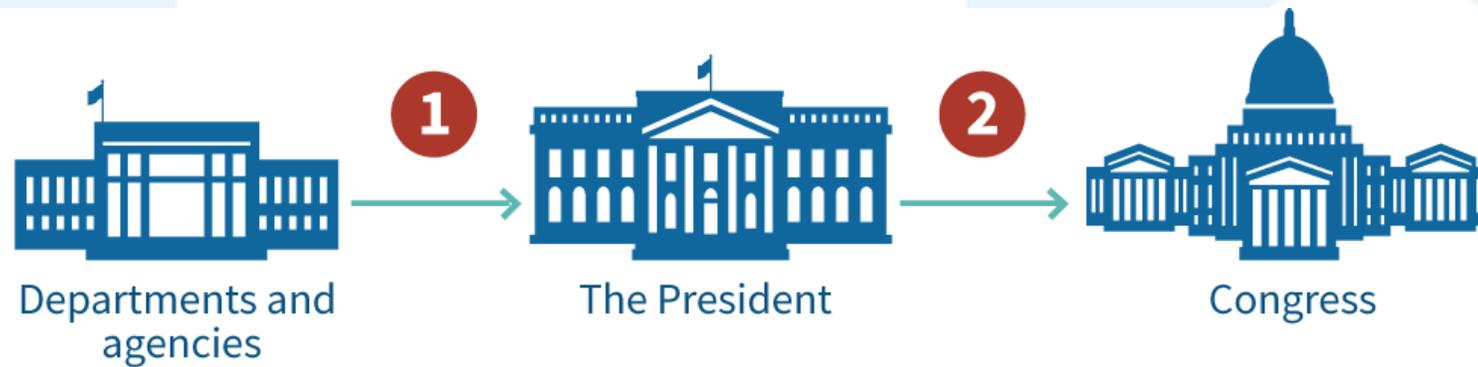
**FIGURE 1**  
Composition of Federal Spending  
Fiscal year 2019

Share of total

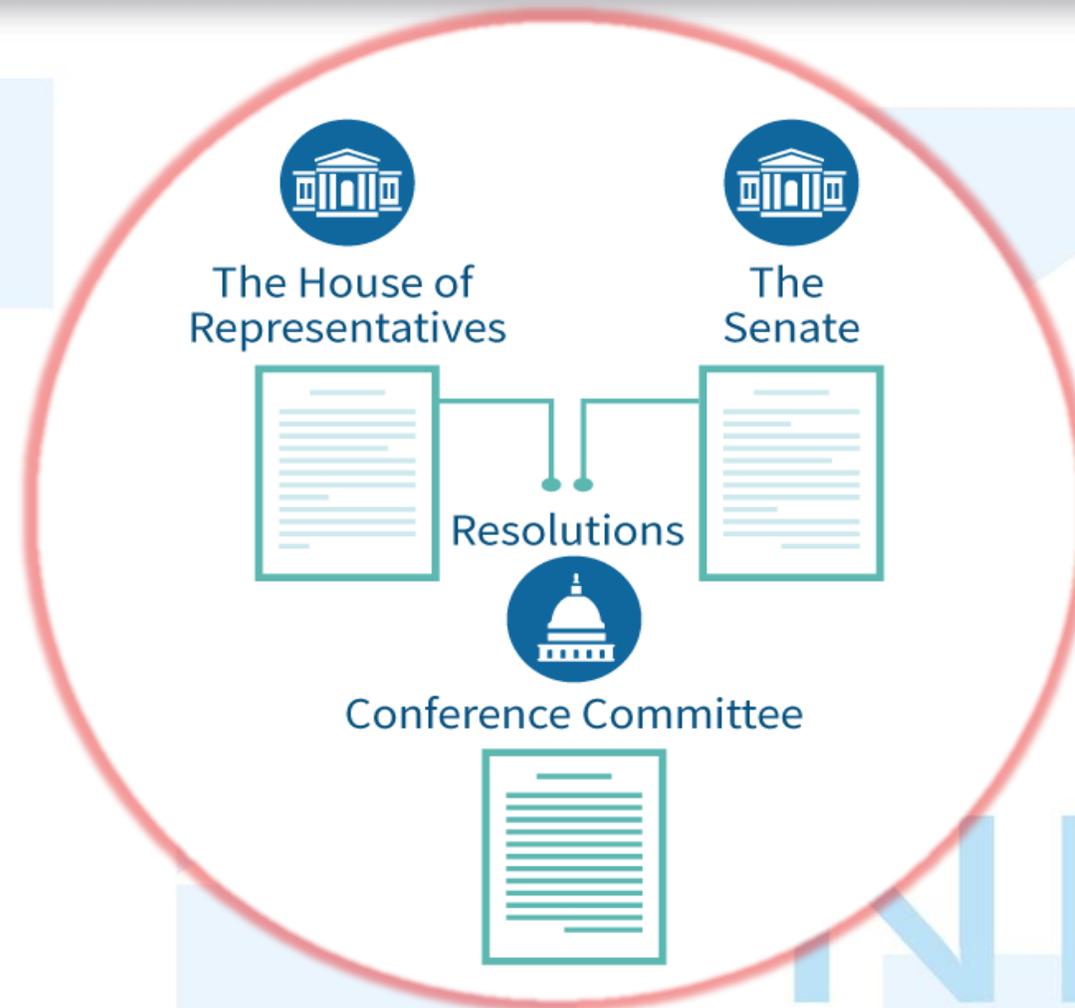


Source: Congressional Budget Office. *The Budget and Economic Outlook: 2020 to 2030*, January 2020. Tax Policy Center, 2020.

# Step 1: The President Submits Proposal



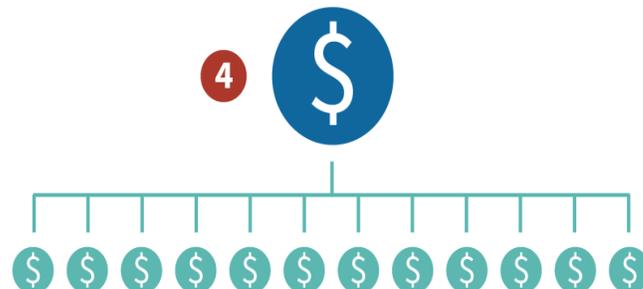
# Step 2: Budget Resolutions



# Step 3: Appropriation Bills Drafted

Committees NLIHC pays attention to:

- Senate banking
- Housing and Urban affairs
- Housing Financial Services
- Appropriations Committee
- House and Senate committees on Veteran's affairs
- Housing Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
- House Budget Committee - 12 Subcommittees



# Step 4 & 5: Chambers Vote, President Signs

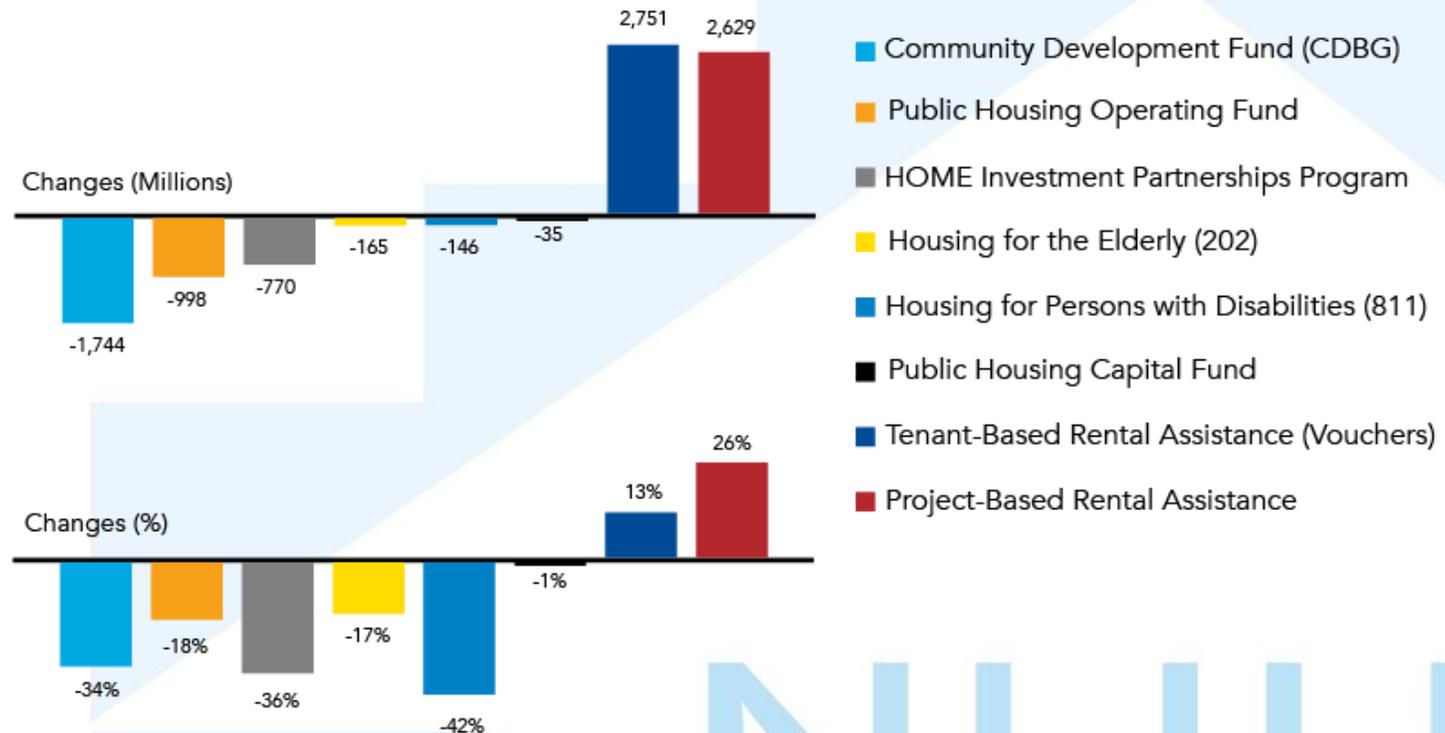


# HUD's Budget Over Time

- Funding for vouchers and project-based rental assistance has increased since FY10

- Funding for every other HUD program has decreased since FY10

Changes in Funding Levels for Key HUD Programs (FY10-FY20)



Note: Adjusted for inflation

**Questions?**

# Advocacy

# Advocacy vs. Lobbying

## Advocacy

- Public education and organizing in support of your mission
- Includes informing public officials about an issue or problem without specific legislation

## Lobbying

- Communicating with decision makers
- Communicating about existing or potential legislation
- ***Asking the decision maker to vote a specific way on legislation***

## Resources

- [www.bolderadvocacy.org](http://www.bolderadvocacy.org)

# Your role as an advocate: Your views matter!



**Your elected officials make their decisions about votes by considering:**

- Their political party position
- What their constituents value
- Their personal values
- Political and financial feasibility

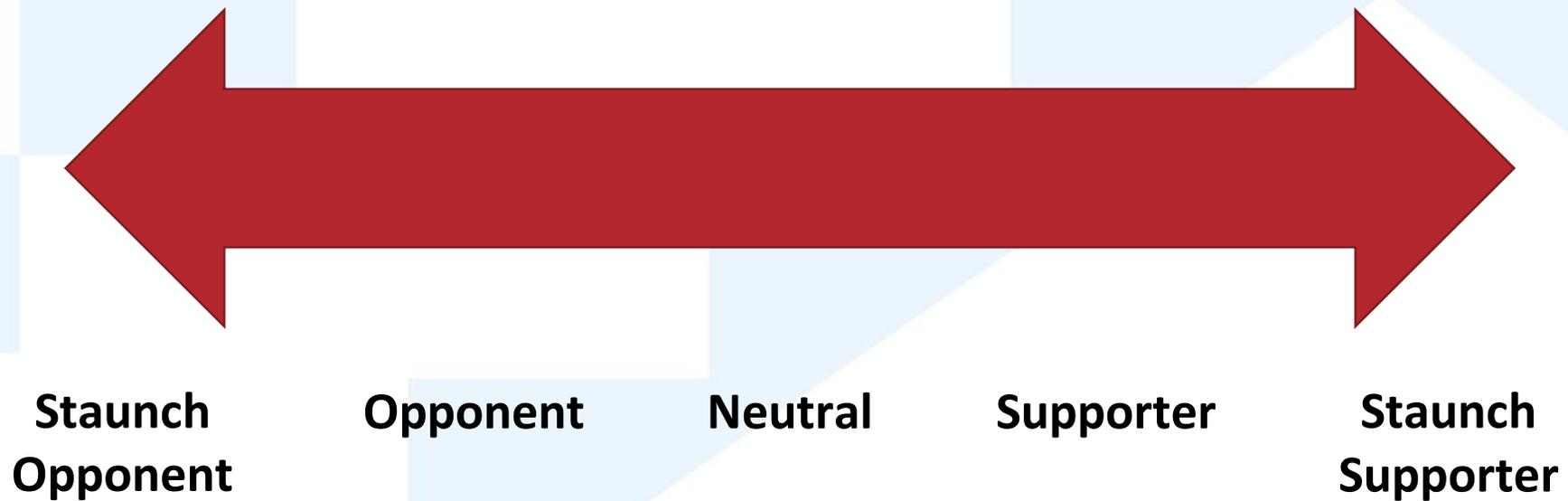
**Your views and priorities influence their positions on issues**

# The Pillars of an Advocacy Campaign



- Identify your goal(s)
- Identify the right target
- Assess your strengths and limitations as a coalition
- Create an agenda
- Prepare messaging
- Broaden and mobilize your base

# What is the Goal?



# Advocacy Meeting Expectations



- Very often, you are the expert
- Advocacy meetings are just conversations--try to make it personal & establish a relationship
- Remember to listen to craft talking points
- <https://www.aclu.org/other/tips-meeting-your-elected-officials>

# Advocacy Meeting Prep



1. Meeting with a staffer is sometimes better than meeting with the actual elected official – staffers can be more knowledgeable about your specific issues
2. Schedule at least two weeks in advance
3. Do research on the office, staff, platforms, etc., show that you are interested in what they are doing, not just in what you are doing.
4. Establish a tone of partnership

# Advocacy Meeting Prep cont.



- Prep materials with specific stats/experiences/stories from your state/city/community that support your claim
- Come with talking points and questions prepared, and make an agenda on who speaks when on what issues - practice beforehand
- Make sure you know your meeting platform: phone, Zoom, Webex, etc.
- <http://www.nlihc.org/housing-needs-by-state>

# During Advocacy Meetings



- Introduce yourself and your organization (if applicable)
- Use this as an opportunity to educate your elected official about the work you do and the issues more broadly
  - Provide data and experience (numbers and stories)
- Connect your work to the elected official's interests
- Make a specific ask
  - “Support/oppose xyz legislation”
- Leave behind materials

**DISTRICT-LEVEL RENTER STATISTICS**

	Total Renter Households	Severely Burdened Households*	% with Severe Burden		Affordable and Available Rental Units Per 100	Surplus/ (Deficit) of Affordable and Available Rental Units
Income at or below 30% of AMI	20,603	15,008	73%	Income at or below 30% of AMI	32	-13,942
Income between 31% and 50% of AMI	15,258	5,396	35%	Income at or below 50% of AMI	45	-19,864
Income between 51% and 80% of AMI	14,834	1,475	10%	Income at or below 80% of AMI	80	-10,099
All Renter Households	94,557	22,322	24%			

**Renters make up 36% of all households in the District**

Source: NLIHC tabulations of 2012-2016 Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) data

**STATE-LEVEL RENTER STATISTICS**

	Total Renter Households	Severely Burdened Households*	% with Severe Burden		Affordable and Available Rental Units Per 100	Surplus/ (Deficit) of Affordable and Available Rental Units
Income at or below 30%** of AMI	193,672	142,163	73%	Income at or below 30%** of AMI	34	-127,861
Income between 31%** and 50% of AMI	123,298	32,023	26%	Income at or below 50% of AMI	58	-132,506
Income between 51% and 80% of AMI	156,276	6,561	4%	Income at or below 80% of AMI	103	13,075
All Renter Households	729,329	181,620	25%			

**Renters make up 33% of all households in the state**

Source: NLIHC tabulations of 2018 American Community Survey (ACS) Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS)

**REGIONAL RENTAL AFFORDABILITY STATISTICS**

Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs) and Counties in Districts	Total Renter Households	AMI	30% of AMI	Rent Affordable at 30% of AMI	One Bdrm Fair Market Rent	One Bdrm Housing Wage	Two Bdrm Fair Market Rent	Two Bdrm Housing Wage	Hours at Minimum Wage for Two Bdrm	Avg Renter Wage
Baltimore-Columbia-Towson MSA	350,557	\$104,000	\$31,200	\$780	\$1,105	\$21.25	\$1,376	\$26.46	96	\$18.86
Washington-Arlington-Alexandria HMFA	286,775	\$126,000	\$37,800	\$945	\$1,500	\$28.85	\$1,707	\$32.83	119	\$18.88

Source: Out of Reach 2020. This congressional district includes at least a portion of the Fair Market Rent (FMR) areas listed above. For FMR areas that span more than one state, the data reflect this state's geography. For districts covering more than seven FMR areas, only the seven largest are shown.

\*Severely Burdened: Households spending more than 50% of income on housing costs, including utilities. \*\*Or poverty guideline, if higher. AMI = Area Median Income. Last updated in July 2020. Please Contact NLIHC research staff at (202) 662-1530 to request additional information.

# After Advocacy Meetings

- Express your appreciation to the legislator and their staff
- Share what you learned
- Follow up and build a relationship with the office
- Continue the conversation and hold them accountable

# Advocacy Campaign Tools

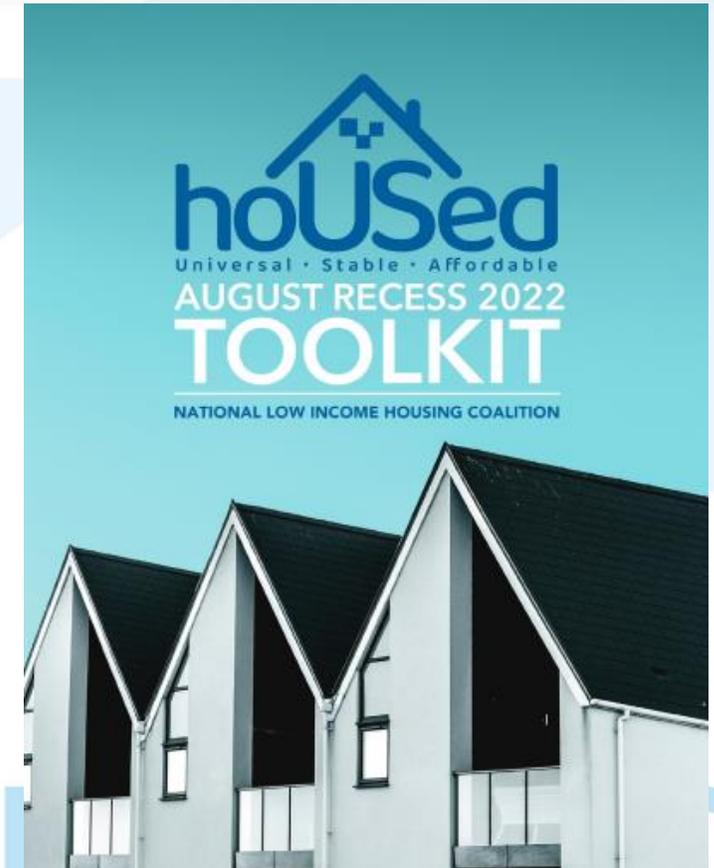


- Ongoing, positive relationship building
- Social and traditional media
- Call-in days
- Meetings
- Letters and petitions
- Hosting events
- Demonstrations
- Site visits

# What if my elected official isn't interested in funding affordable housing?



- NLHHC has a toolkit with talking points to use!
  - The toolkit can be viewed in the app
- Schedule tours to affordable housing developments with your elected officials
  - Partnering with organizations across sectors (faith-based, healthcare, community-based, nonprofits etc.)
  - Combining data from multiple counties/states
  - Using marketing to leverage power/elevate message



**Questions?**

# NLIHC Policy Priorities

# 2022 Public Policy Priorities



- Ensure federal responses to the pandemic and disasters are fair and equitable
- Protect and expand the national Housing Trust Fund
- Preserve and increase resources for federal affordable housing programs
- Ensure protections for low-income renters
- Promote equitable access to affordable housing and opportunity
- Champion anti-poverty solutions



# NLIHC HoUSed Campaign Overview



- **Universal Rental Assistance:** Expand rental assistance to make it universally available to households in need.
- **Supply:** Increase and preserve the supply of affordable rental homes.
- **Emergency Stabilization Resources:** Provide emergency rental assistance to households in crisis.
- **Renter Protections:** Enact legislation to establish vital renter protections.



[nlihc.org/housed](https://nlihc.org/housed)

# Ensure Universal Rental Assistance



## **Goal: Make housing assistance available to all eligible households**

- Significantly expand & guarantee funding for Housing Choice Vouchers.
- Create a renters' tax credit to cover rental costs exceeding 30% of renters' income.
- Make housing assistance "mandatory" Congressional spending.

Learn more here:

[https://nlihc.org/sites/default/files/Solution\\_Rental\\_Assistance.pdf](https://nlihc.org/sites/default/files/Solution_Rental_Assistance.pdf)

# Expand & Preserve the Supply of Affordable Rental Homes



**Goal: Preserve & increase the supply of affordable, available, and accessible homes for the lowest-income renters**

- Expand the national Housing Trust Fund to at least \$40 billion annually.
- Provide at least \$70 billion to preserve and rehabilitate public housing.
- Repeal the Faircloth amendment to build more public housing.
- Require inclusive zoning/land reforms to reverse residential segregation.

Learn more here:

[https://nlihc.org/sites/default/files/Solution\\_Supply.pdf](https://nlihc.org/sites/default/files/Solution_Supply.pdf)

# Provide Emergency Rental Assistance to Households in Crisis



**Goal: Create a National Housing Stabilization Fund to provide emergency assistance to households experiencing an economic shock**

- Enact the “Eviction Crisis Act,” which would create a national housing stabilization fund to provide short-term, emergency assistance to help renters avoid eviction and remain stably housed.

Learn more here: [https://nlihc.org/sites/default/files/Solution\\_Stabilization\\_Fund.pdf](https://nlihc.org/sites/default/files/Solution_Stabilization_Fund.pdf)

# Strengthen and Enforce Renter Protections



## Goal: Enact legislation to establish vital renter protections

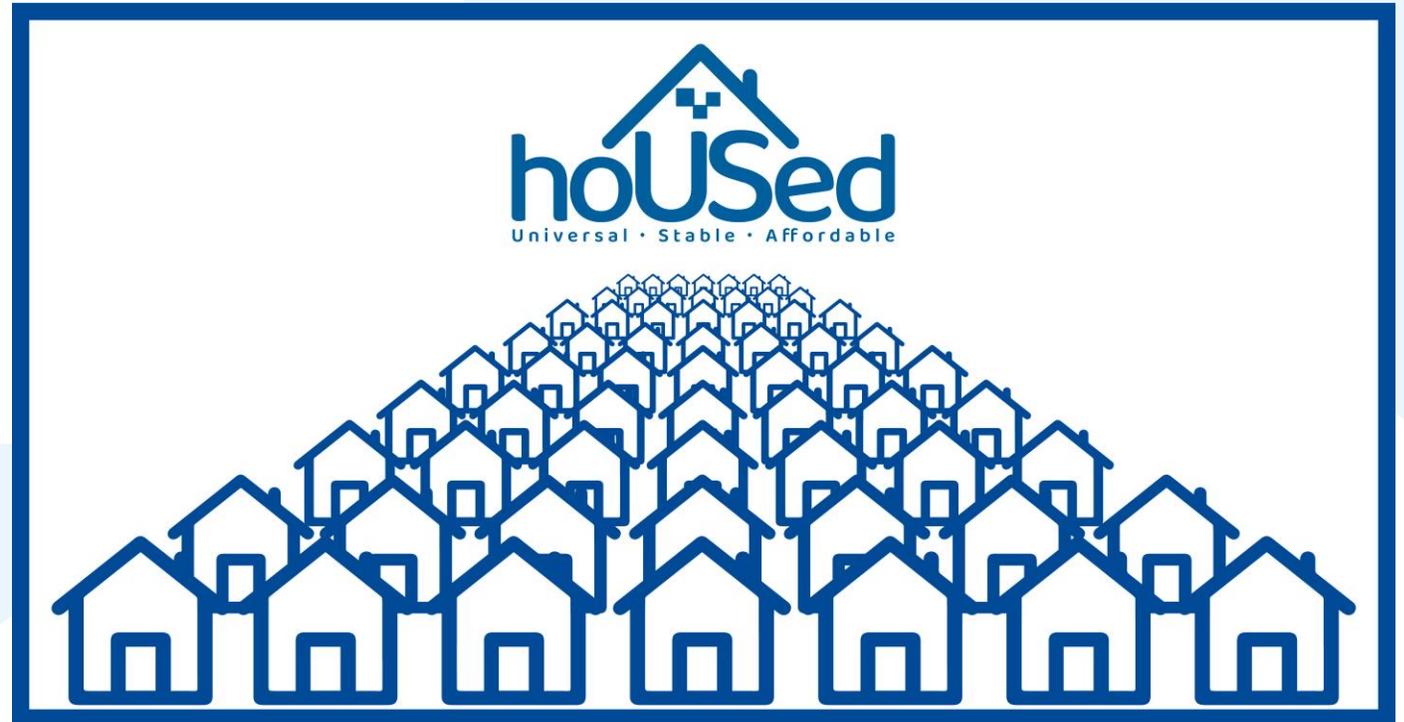
- Prohibit source of income discrimination.
- Establish and fund a national right to counsel.
- Create “just cause” eviction protections.
- Expand the Fair Housing Act to ban discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, and source of income.
- End arbitrary tenant screening and eviction policies, including blanket bans on people with a criminal history and “one-strike” policies.
- Provide resources to all income-eligible households, regardless of immigration status.

Learn more here: [https://nlihc.org/sites/default/files/Solution\\_Renter-Protections.pdf](https://nlihc.org/sites/default/files/Solution_Renter-Protections.pdf)

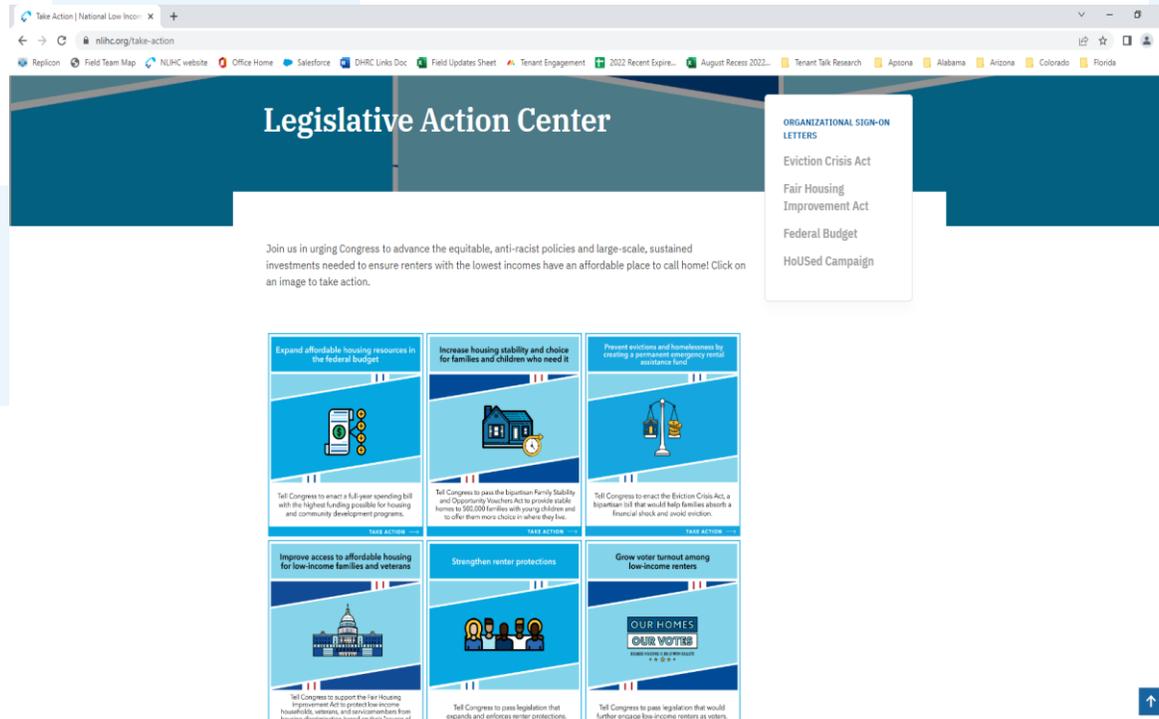
# Current Legislative Opportunities: Take Action!



- Expand affordable housing resources in FY 23 Budget
- LIHTC reform in Tax Extender legislation
- End goal: Universal rental assistance, referenced in the Ending Homelessness Act



# Your turn!



Take Action | National Low Income Housing Coalition

## Legislative Action Center

ORGANIZATIONAL SIGN-ON LETTERS

- Eviction Crisis Act
- Fair Housing Improvement Act
- Federal Budget
- HoUSed Campaign

Join us in urging Congress to advance the equitable, anti-racist policies and large-scale, sustained investments needed to ensure renters with the lowest incomes have an affordable place to call home! Click on an image to take action.

Expand affordable housing resources in the federal budget	Increase housing stability and choice for families and children who need it	Prevent evictions and homelessness by creating a permanent emergency rental assistance fund
Tell Congress to enact a full-year spending bill with the highest funding possible for housing and community development programs.	Tell Congress to pass the bipartisan Family Stability and Opportunity Investment Act to provide stable homes to 500,000 families with young children and to offer them more choice in where they live.	Tell Congress to enact the Eviction Crisis Act, a bipartisan bill that would help families absorb a financial shock and avoid eviction.
Improve access to affordable housing for low-income families and veterans	Strengthen renter protections	Grow voter turnout among low-income renters
Tell Congress to support the Fair Housing Improvement Act to protect low-income households, veterans, and servicemembers from housing discrimination based on race, gender, or disability.	Tell Congress to pass legislation that expands and enforces renter protections.	Tell Congress to pass legislation that would further engage low-income renters as voters.

10:27 5G

### Ask Congress for Increased Housing Investments in Fiscal Year 2023

[Show More](#)

Title \* ▾

Full Name \*

Address \*

Zip \* city and state not required

Phone \*

Email \*

Your Organization

AA p2a.co

# Example text



**As your constituent, I'm writing to urge you to ensure affordable housing, homelessness, and community development programs receive the highest allocation of discretionary funds possible in fiscal year (FY) 2023, and specifically ask that you.....**

Growing up in Las Vegas, NV I witnessed disinvestment in the housing in my low income neighborhood. Due to the lack of federally subsidized housing in the area, a lot of households in my neighborhood lost their homes during the housing crash in 2009. My own family had to file for bankruptcy to stay afloat but many others were not as lucky. If Congress invests the highest levels possible in housing, homelessness, and community development programs communities like mine and across the country can have affordable and accessible housing.

**..... I ask that you work with your colleagues to enact a FY23 spending bill that funds housing vouchers, public housing, Homeless Assistance Grants, eviction prevention, and tribal housing at the numbers outlined above or higher.**

# Support NLIHC through membership



**It's never been easy.  
Our commitment is unwavering.  
Join us and amplify the voices of  
the poorest families in need.**

**OUR MEMBERS  
ARE OUR STRENGTH.**



NATIONAL LOW INCOME  
HOUSING COALITION

JOIN TODAY  
[WWW.NLIHC.ORG/MEMBERSHIP](http://WWW.NLIHC.ORG/MEMBERSHIP)

**NLIHC**  
[www.nlihc.org](http://www.nlihc.org)



## Q&A

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