



Legislative Agenda Builds On Strengths Addresses Challenges

The New York State Rural Advocates held their annual Legislative Conference in Albany on February 27th and 28th to impart to our state Senate and Assembly representatives the need for continued support for critical affordable housing programs to address the community development needs of rural New York.

Some of the key issues addressed in the Legislative Agenda of the Advocates include:

Governor Cuomo’s Housing Requests: Advocates expressed support for the Governor’s Housing Program requests, and encouraged additional funding, such as \$10 million additional for the AHC program, an additional \$4 million for Access to Home, an additional \$1 million for the HOPE/RESTORE program, an additional \$5.8 million for the NY Main Street Program, and an additional \$13 million for manufactured housing replacement. The agenda recommends passage of the Governor’s request for Rural Rental Assistance, and the previously appropriated House NY 2020 plan, which provides \$2 billion in housing program and project support. The agenda also request the sub-allocation of a portion of the appropriation of Rural and Urban

Community Investment Funding to the Office of Community Renewal at NYS HCR. Other suggestions include creating a statute for the Manufactured Housing Replacement Program

Senior Housing: A proposal to support staff in senior projects to coordinate resident needs is part of the housing agenda, as well. These resident support services have been shown to divert seniors from expensive nursing home care. The proposal is to provide this service in all newly developed senior projects, as well as provide coverage in existing complexes.

The proposal also includes the launch of a measurement and evaluation system to track actual savings in health care expenses for seniors served by the program.

Mortgage Foreclosure: Current funding for mortgage foreclosure assistance is set to expire in September of this year. Unfortunately, the foreclosure crisis has not abated in recent years, with heavy case-loads at rural foreclosure prevention agencies. The Advocates are requesting \$10 million to continue prevention services past the end of September, and an additional \$20 million for the next full year of the program.

Rural Preservation Program Funding: The Advocates are requesting a total of \$100,000 per RPC from a variety of sources, including the Mortgage Insurance Fund and other sources. This request also includes \$590,000 in new money to bring all of the RPCs to an even \$100,000 in state funding.

Also included in the budget request is \$500,000 to support new RPCs in counties that are currently unserved by a locally-based housing nonprofit. Over the years, some rural counties have lost their RPCs for a variety of reasons, and those organizations have not been replaced in the program. Other counties have never benefited from having an RPC within their borders, and this budget request seeks to correct that absence. The request includes additional RHC technical assistance support for rural municipalities.

In This Issue...	
Tax Credit Training.....	Pg 2
Homeless Legislation.....	Pg 3
Tenant Protections Bill.....	Pg 3
New HCR Commissioner.....	Pg 4
HUD Secretary Approval.....	Pg 4
Lead Paint NOFA.....	Pg 4
Housing Counseling Grant.....	Pg 6
Climate Change Grants.....	Pg 6

RD Rural Delivery

Rural Delivery is published by the New York State Rural Housing Coalition, Inc. The Coalition is a non-profit statewide membership organization dedicated to strengthening and revitalizing rural New York by assisting housing and community development providers.

Officers:

William Vogt, Chair
Judy Eisgruber, Vice Chair
Kent Brown, Treasurer
Velga Kundzins, Secretary

Directors:

Jill Alcorn
Renee Bloom
Scott Campbell
Julie Chevalier
Michelle DeGarmo
Kristi Dippel
Bruce Garcia
Lynda Hitt
Tammy Hathaway

Bruce Misarski
Faith Moore
Marion Naramore
Matthew Nelson
Marlene Papa
Chris Raymond
Tony Scalici
Cheryl Shenkle-O'Neill
Sharon Reynolds

James Thatcher

Staff:

Colin McKnight
Deputy Director &
Acting Executive Director

Lorraine Wynne
Chief of Finance &
Strategic Operations

Blair Sebastian
Project Coordinator

John Grover
Project Coordinator

Rural Delivery is published monthly and delivered electronically to a mailing list of 200 community development professionals and policy makers.

For information on advertising in Rural Delivery and to receive a copy of our advertising rate sheet, please contact the Coalition at: 79 North Pearl Street, Albany, New York 12207
Tel: 518/458-8696 * Fax: 518/458-8896

Web Site: www.ruralhousing.org



Bits and Pieces...

Housing Outlook Published

Lancaster Pollard has published a report on the outlook for the housing market in 2017. Key outtakes from the report include a prediction of a continuation of the affordability crisis, as well as strong rental demand.

The full article can be found at www.lancasterpollard.com/NewsDetail/tci-hsg-2017-outlook?_cldee=Y29saW5AcnVyYWxob3Vz-aW5nLm9yZw%3d%3d&recipientid=contact-f3162a750f4be411b733000c29ed7c50-9ad51ac61cd647f2b9f71a47c4262ec7&esid=5c9943df-1479-4a9a-9b64-226c5c63ab0f&urlid=0.

Tax Credit Specialist Training

The National Center for Housing Management will hold their Tax Credit Specialist Training in Albany from May17-19th. The early bird discount deadline is April 17th. For more info, visit www.nchm.org/Event-Info/id/TCSALNY051717.

LeadingAge Conference

LeadingAge NY will hold their statewide conference from April 4-6th in Syracuse. Of note in the conference agenda is a workshop on Senior Housing 101. What are the types of senior housing property and corresponding income and residency restrictions? What kinds of senior housing is being developed now, using what funding sources? This is a perfect session for new staff. To review the workshop content, visit https://s1.goeshow.com/leadingage_ny/2017Housing/ereg598711.cfm?pg=agenda.

Homeless Vets Grants Due

Applications for the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program, Homeless Female Veterans Program, and other similar grants are due March 31st. \$12 million is available in this round. See www.grants.gov/web/grants/search-grants.html for NOFA details for Notice FOA-VETS-17-01.

Federal and US military employees can support the Rural Housing Coalition through the annual Combined Federal Campaign (CFC). If you are a federal government or military employee and would like to donate through the CFC, please enter CFC code #9614 on your pledge card during the next fund drive.

Legislation Introduced To End Homelessness And Housing Poverty Through Tax Reform

Representative Keith Ellison reintroduced on February 8th the “Common Sense Housing Investment Act of 2017,” (HR 948) to end homelessness and housing poverty through tax reform. The bill calls for modest reforms to the mortgage interest deduction (MID), a \$70 billion tax write-off that largely benefits America’s highest-income households, and reinvests the significant savings into providing affordable housing for people with the greatest needs by expanding the national Housing Trust Fund, the Low Income Housing Tax Credit, public housing, and rental assistance solutions—without adding any costs to the federal government.

The reforms are simple and bipartisan. First, the bill reduces the amount of a mortgage eligible for the tax break from \$1 million to \$500,000—impacting fewer than 6% of homeowners with a mortgage. Second, the bill converts the

MID into a tax credit, allowing 15 million more low and moderate income homeowners who currently do not benefit from the MID to get a much-needed tax break.

HR 948 builds on the success of Mr. Ellison’s recent Dear Colleague letter, signed by 34 members of Congress, urging the Ways and Means Committee to reinvest any savings from housing-related tax reforms into affordable housing solutions.

NLIHC and the United for Homes campaign—including more than 2,300 national, state, and local organizations and elected officials in all 435 congressional districts—strongly endorse HR 948. NLIHC urges all housing advocates to ask their Representatives to co-sponsor HR 948 to help end homelessness and housing poverty in comprehensive tax reform.

The text of HR 948 is at: <http://bit.ly/2l3e0KY>.

Tenant Protections Bill Introduced

Representative Keith Ellison introduced the “Equal Opportunity for Residential Representation Act of 2017” (HR 1146), designed to help provide legal and supportive services to lower income families, on February 21st.

The bill would create a pilot program at HUD that would distribute grants to state-based organizations to provide legal representative assistance to families with incomes at or below 80% of their area medium income. Because counsel is not guaranteed in civil court, many low income families are susceptible to being evicted without sufficient legal representation. A similar initiative was recently announced in New York City, where almost 90% of tenants appear in civil court without representation.

“Every American deserves fair and equal representation under the law, whether in federal court or tenant or housing court,” Mr. Ellison stated in a press release on the bill. “We should be following New York’s lead and make sure that a person’s ability to afford a lawyer does not dictate whether they end up deeper in poverty or homeless”.

As of this writing, the text of the bill is not yet available online.

40
MINUS 2 and
COUNTING

The Rural Housing Coalition’s 2017 Annual Appeal
“40 Minus 2 and Counting”
has launched!

Please visit www.ruralhousing.org to view the appeal, and see what the Coalition has been up to for 38 years!

Mark Your Calendars!

2017 Affordable Housing and
Community Development
Conference

September 11, 12, and 13

By popular acclaim, we will
once again be convening in
Oswego!

HUD Secretary Expected To Be Approved This Week

The full Senate is expected to vote this week to confirm Dr. Ben Carson to serve as HUD secretary. In his confirmation hearing before the Senate Banking Committee and in written responses to questions for the record, Dr. Carson committed to expanding and improving federal housing programs and to enforcing federal fair housing law. Once confirmed, advocates promise to work with Dr. Carson to follow through on these commitments to ensure that the lowest income people in America have decent, affordable and accessible homes.

At his confirmation hearing, Dr. Carson stated his belief that the federal government has an important role to play in supporting deeply poor households and families. He gave strong support to rental assistance programs, public housing, VASH vouchers, Community Development Block Grants, Choice Neighborhoods, and lead abatement programs, and he recognized the role housing plays as a social determinant of health. He acknowledged that fair housing is the “law of the land” and committed to upholding and implementing the law.

In his written responses to questions from Ranking Member Sherrod Brown and Senator Elizabeth

Warren, Dr. Carson stated that he “will absolutely commit” to advocating for housing to be included in the president’s infrastructure package, agreed to consider hiring additional staff to enforce federal fair housing laws, and gave support to increasing efforts to help formerly incarcerated people reintegrate into their communities. Dr. Carson stated that he is “a fan of the Low Income Housing Tax Credit” and that healthy housing will be one of his priorities. He promised to “call for continued investment to end homelessness for veterans, the chronically homeless, and children and families.”

Dr. Carson affirmed that he will advocate for increasing resources for affordable housing for people with the lowest incomes. “When it comes to deep affordability, though, removing all regulatory barriers won’t get you there,” Dr. Carson wrote. “It comes down to subsidy. Subsidy levels haven’t changed appreciably under Democratic or Republican administrations. I think we can all agree that we will all make sure housing is a key consideration in every appropriations bill.”

Moreover, Dr. Carson also promised to “recruit a bipartisan list of practitioners, not ideologues, to serve as assistant secretaries.”

New Commissioner Announced



At the Joint Hearing on Housing for the New York State budget held on February 17th, it was announced that RurhAnne Visnauskis will replace Jamie Rubin as Commissioner of NYS Homes and Community Renewal. Ms. Visnauskis previously served as Executive Deputy Commissioner at HCR, where she was responsible for oversight of all housing and finance programs for the agency.

Ms. Visnauskis brings to the position experience in key positions at NYC’s Department of Housing Preservation and Development, including the role of Commissioner. She also was Managing Director of the Housing Advisory Board of the Robin Hood Foundation, New York’s largest poverty-fighting agency. She holds a bachelor’s degree in Urban Studies from the University of Pennsylvania, and a Master’s in Urban Planning from NYU.

Mr. Rubin leaves HCR to become Director of Operations for the Executive Chamber.

2017 Lead-Based Paint Hazard Control NOFA Released

The LBPHC program funds units of state, local and tribal government to implement comprehensive programs to identify and remediate lead based paint hazards in privately owned rental or owner occupied housing. Healthy Homes Supplemental funds may be used only in homes also receiving HUD-funded lead hazard control work (interim controls or abatement). Grantees must use an inspection tool that identifies all 29 hazards identified in the Healthy Homes Rating System (HHRs) for assessing, prioritizing and repairing the identified health and safety hazards within those units. For more information about the HHRs, see HUD’s HHRs webpage.

Applications are due on March 23, 2017. To review the full NOFA, visit <https://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/documents/huddoc?id=2017lbphcnofa.pdf>.

Asset Manager

Openings exist in the Buffalo, Syracuse and NYC offices of NYS Homes and Community Renewal for Asset Managers. Qualified candidates will have experience with the Low Income Housing Tax Credit program, knowledge of Section 8 HQS inspections, proficiency with Microsoft programs and excellent written and verbal skills. For more information, visit www.nyshcr.org/AboutUs/JobOpportunities/hp/OHPAssetManager.pdf. EOE

Housing Services Representative

Work in conjunction with the Section 8 Program to assist low income individuals and families. Position maintains an overall caseload of 205 participants, responsible for all aspects of waiting list pledging minimum of 98% utilization, and ensuring program compliance of participants.

Candidate should possess an Associate Degree in human services field and one year of experience, or three years' experience working with economically and socially disadvantaged individuals and families. Position requires basic arithmetic and strong written skills. Computer proficiency with Word, Outlook, Excel, Power Point, Access and Excel programs is a must, and data entry helpful. Competitive salary and fringe benefit program

To apply, please email a detailed cover letter and resume to:

Mary Morgante-Rice, PathStone Corporation, Batavia City Centre, Room 8A, 106 Main Street, Batavia, NY 14020. Email to mrice@pathstone.org.

Career Opportunities

Executive Director

Housing Assistance Program of Essex County (HAPEC), a premier nonprofit housing and community development organization serving the Adirondack region, seeks a highly skilled, visionary and mission-oriented Executive Director. The ideal candidate will bring expertise in community planning, development and management of housing programs, staff supervision, budget and financial management, and grant administration. Excellent interpersonal skills ranging from office management to relationships with local residents, elected officials, and fellow agency heads, to state-level elected officials and agencies are essential. Learn more about HAPEC and position requirements at: hapec.org. Send cover letter, resume and salary requirements by Mar. 31st to: HapecEDjob@gmail.com.

EEO employer

Portfolio Associate

NYS HCR has an opening in the Buffalo office for a Portfolio Associate in the Office of Housing Preservation. The Housing Portfolio Management Unit is responsible for the asset management and compliance monitoring of the Agency's existing housing loan portfolio. This portfolio has been financed under various loan and subsidy programs including the Secured Loan Rental Program, the Section 8 Mod Program (Allenhurst Apts.) and the Mobile Home Cooperative Program. Bachelors degree preferred but not required, background in property management, and working knowledge of governmental housing programs. For more information, visit www.nyshcr.org/AboutUs/JobOpportunities/hp/OFDPorfolioAssociate.pdf. EOE

VISTA Member Positions

9 VISTA members are sought for nonprofit housing agencies across New York. Challenging yet fulfilling opportunities to become involved in the affordable housing industry. For more information, please visit <https://www.vistacampus.gov/> to learn more about the VISTA program and to set up an account. Search New York position opportunities, and look for 2017-18 New York State Rural Housing Coalition postings for the individual opportunities located near you. Or call Colin at (518) 458-8696 x14 for assistance. This is a great opportunity for new graduates or anyone with an interest in learning the affordable housing and community development field.

EOE

The New York State Rural Housing Coalition is happy to be able to provide help wanted advertising opportunities for our members and non-profit community development agencies. Ad copy must be provided in Microsoft Word format, and may be transmitted by email to rhc@ruralhousing.org. Ad copy must comply with federal and state equal opportunity requirements to be published, and must be received by the 25th of the month to ensure placement in the succeeding issue of Rural Delivery. Ads provided in this fashion will also be posted in the Career Opportunities page of the Coalition's website, unless a request is specifically made not to place the advertisement on-line.

Housing Counseling Grant NOFA

The purpose of HUD's Housing Counseling Grant Program is to provide funds that shall be used for providing counseling and advice to tenants and homeowners, both current and prospective, with respect to property maintenance, financial management/literacy, and such other matters as may be appropriate to assist them in improving their housing conditions, meeting their financial needs, and fulfilling the responsibilities of tenancy or homeownership. Funding provided by this NOFA is intended to support HUD-approved housing counseling agencies to respond flexibly to the needs of residents and neighbor-

hoods, and deliver a wide variety of housing counseling services to homebuyers, homeowners, renters, and the homeless. This NOFA plays an integral role in the continued stabilization of our nation's housing market by helping individuals and families obtain housing and stay in their homes through responsible homeownership or affordable rental housing. Traditionally underserved populations, such as minorities, the elderly, veterans, persons with disabilities, persons with limited English proficiency and residents of rural areas, face additional housing and economic challenges.

HUD's Comprehensive Housing

Counseling Grant Program funds housing counselors who provide expert, unbiased guidance and information to help families and individuals meet their housing needs and improve their financial situations. Moreover, HUD grants assist housing counselors to act as an important safeguard against scams and discrimination, and to act as an important gateway to local, state, federal and private housing assistance.

The application deadline is March 17, 2017. See the full NOFA at <https://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/documents/huddoc?id=2017schcnofa.pdf>.

Climate Change Resilience Grants

Five grants of \$100,000 each are now available to local organizations around the country working to build more resilient communities. As part of its Climate and Cultural Resilience Grant Program, Enterprise Community Partners Inc. (Enterprise) released a request for proposals that use creative placemaking strategies to strengthen the connection between cultural and climate resilience. Grantees will identify a local climate resilience challenge and propose projects in which residents, artists and other creative and cultural practitioners collaborate to address the challenge and other concerns such as equity, racial equity, economic disparities, health disparities and community engagement and cohesion.

"At Enterprise, we believe a key part of ending housing insecurity is

enabling communities to respond and adapt to climate changes," said Laurel Blatchford, senior vice president and chief program officer, Enterprise Community Partners. "In addition to creating physical infrastructure that helps communities respond to these challenges, community resilience also depends on human networks. Through Enterprise's Climate and Cultural Resilience Grant Program organizations will have a chance to focus on the role of arts, culture and creativity as central elements of a resilient community and to use creative placemaking strategies within the context of climate resilience projects."

Enterprise's Climate and Cultural Resilience Grant Program is generously supported by funding from The Kresge Foundation, The Kendeda Fund, and HUD's Capacity

Building for Community Development and Affordable Housing Program.

Enterprise's Climate and Cultural Resilience grants are available to community organizations across the country, including those working within rural and Native American communities. Enterprise will serve as an advising partner for the grantees, providing technical assistance to their projects and guidance on creative placemaking strategies. Grantees will participate in a peer-learning cohort which will convene throughout the one-year grant period beginning June 1, 2017.

To review the RFP, visit www.enterprisecommunity.org/news-and-events/news-releases/enterprise-announces-rfp-climate-and-cultural-resilience-grants#sthash.R3AeDgal.dpuf. Proposals are due by March 31, 2017.

Visit our website at www.ruralhousing.org
'Like' us on Facebook for up-to-the-minute news