



The E-Newsletter of the National AIDS Housing Coalition

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1. AIDS Housing Funding for FY06

On November 30, President Bush signed the Transportation, Treasury, Housing and Urban Development, the Judiciary, the District of Columbia and Independent Agencies (TTHUD) Appropriations Act for FY06, including **\$289 million** for the Housing Opportunities for Persons With AIDS (HOPWA) program. Post-rescission, \$282 million was available for HOPWA for the fiscal year that ended September 30, 2005. Of the FY06 total, \$1.5 million is set aside for technical assistance, training and oversight. The administrative provisions continue to correct anomalies for HOPWA, including adjustments to the New York and New Jersey formula jurisdictions. In addition, the administrative provisions set out that the high incidence bonus be allocated on the basis of area incidence reported over a three year period rather than on an annual basis as in the past.

HOPWA was one of few low income housing programs to receive an increase over FY05 funding. The McKinney Vento Homeless Assistance Grant program saw a significant increase of \$100 million for a funding level of \$1.34 billion for the current fiscal year. Other low-income housing programs relied on by people with HIV/AIDS saw small increases, cuts or flat funding. The 811 program for persons with disabilities was funded at \$239 million and language was included requiring HUD guidance on targeting rental assistance eligibility criteria, and use of vouchers only for eligible participants, as well as assuring non-profit disability organizations a role in the mainstream program. The Section 8 housing choice voucher program is funded at \$15.573 billion. Included in the total, among other amounts, is \$14.089 billion for renewal of expiring contracts and \$45 million for adjustment to allocations for public housing authorities to fund renewals. The adjustments are made necessary by either temporarily low leasing levels that affect the allocations or by shortfalls resulting from unforeseen or voucher holders exercise of portability. Despite any adjustment, PHAs may not lease more than their authorized levels of units.

HOPWA is expected to fund 124 formula jurisdictions during FY06.

HOPWA, along with other discretionary programs, will be subjected to a one percent (1%) across the board cut via the vehicle of defense appropriations (H.R. 2863; H. Rep. 109-359, 12/18/05) on which action was recently completed. This cut means \$2.89 million less AIDS housing funding for the current fiscal year, an anticipated loss of assistance for 700 households.

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2. NAHC Recommends \$424 Million for HOPWA for FY07

In the face of continued cuts to housing programs, a housing crisis in the Gulf Coast, and a pre-rescission FY06 appropriation of \$289 million for HOPWA (\$7 million less than in 2004), NAHC calls on legislators to increase funding for the vital program in 2007. A higher funding level is particularly important as new research has demonstrated the links between housing status and individual and community health, including housing as HIV prevention.

Every year NAHC releases the *HOPWA Need Paper*, an policy document speaking to need, success of the program, new research, and making the case for a reasonable funding level based on housing need as identified by HOPWA providers. For the coming fiscal year, NAHC asks the administration and Congress to fund HOPWA at **\$424 million**, a \$135 million increase over the FY06 level.

[Click here](#) to view the FY07 Need Paper.

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3. FEMA and HUD Testify on Katrina Housing Response

When Hurricane Katrina hit the Gulf Coast at the end of August it destroyed whole neighborhoods, scattered families, and left many low-income people without a home to return to. Experts estimate that there were over 21,000 people living with HIV/AIDS in the affected areas in LA, AL, and MS so it is no surprise that NAHC and other advocates for HIV/AIDS housing have been carefully following the federal response to this disaster.

In the months following Katrina, both FEMA and the Department of Housing and Urban Development announced programs to address the housing needs of victims of Katrina under the umbrella title of Transitional Housing Assistance for Katrina Evacuees. FEMA's program, the Individual and Household Assistance Program (IHP), serves people who were home-owners and non-HUD assisted renters in the affected regions. HUD's program, the Katrina Disaster Housing Assistance Program (KDHAP), serves individuals who were living in public housing, receiving some form of HUD assistance (i.e. Section 8, HOPWA, etc.), or were homeless at the time of the disaster.

Advocates, the public and media, and members of Congress have been critical at many points of the housing-related response of these federal agencies. In recent weeks, the House Committee on Financial Services, which has jurisdiction over housing policy, held two hearings entitled, "Housing Options in the Aftermath of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita."

The committee had originally planned to have both FEMA and HUD representatives at a single hearing to address response issues in tandem, but HUD Secretary Alphonso Jackson refused the call to appear at the first hearing or send a representative in his stead. It is unclear whether this denial was due to a miscommunication (as a HUD representative stated at the 12/14/05 hearing), a desire to eliminate confusion regarding the two agencies responses by having them appear together (as HUD claimed on other occasions), or an "extraordinary dereliction of duty" (as Rep. David Scott [D-13th GA] stated at the 12/8/05 hearing).

At the first hearing on December 8th, the sole witness was David Garratt, FEMA's Acting Director of Recovery. Members questioned Mr. Garratt about the agency's response to the housing needs of evacuees, Rep. Emanuel Cleaver (D-5th MO) asserting that the biggest issue facing New Orleans right now was housing. Garratt testified that FEMA had assisted hundreds of thousands of victims and that 43 states and the District of Columbia had declared emergencies in an effort to assist. Committee members asked questions about a variety of housing related issues, including slow installation of trailers and mobile homes needed for immediate use, difficulty of obtaining help through FEMA hotlines, and how FEMA is keeping track of those in need of assistance. Members also fiercely questioned Garratt on the decision to end hotel assistance, effective December 1st, for the thousands still residing in hotels and motels, (later extended by FEMA and then again later, by [court-order](#)). Garratt accepted responsibility for this decision. Garratt's full opening statement can be viewed on the committee [website](#).

On December 14th HUD sent two representatives to testify before the committee, Brian Montgomery, the HUD Assistant Secretary for Housing & FHA Commissioner, and Orlando Cabrera, the Assistant Secretary for Public and Indian Housing. Other than committee chair, Rep. Bob Ney (R-18th OH), only seven other members of the committee were in attendance, all of them Democrats and all of them people of color, as noted by Rep. Artur Davis (D-7th AL). Members questioned HUD about an earlier practice of placing Katrina evacuees ahead of people who have been waiting for years on local Section 8 waiting lists. Mr. Cabrera testified that this was no longer the case but did not know the status of getting FEMA to reimburse local PHAs for this use of funds in an effort to hold harmless those on local waiting lists. Cabrera also stated that there were 75,000 people that HUD could identify as eligible for the KDHAP program. When questioned further Cabrera said that so far 12,500 people "were in the process of being assisted." When questioned about small percentage so far served, Cabrera said it was due to the difficulty in locating eligible households. Rep. Barbara Lee (D-9th CA) asked what would happen to those who were previously homeless when their KDHAP assistance ceased at the end of 18 months. Cabrera did not have a concrete answer and stated that this was beyond the scope of "emergency response." Mr. Ney, Mr. Montgomery, and Mr. Cabrera's opening statements can be viewed via the committee [website](#).

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HIV/AIDS & Housing Facts of the Quarter:

The all-cause death rate among homeless HIV positive persons is **five times** the rate of death among housed persons with HIV/AIDS:

5.3 to 8 deaths per 100 person years for HIV positive homeless persons, compared to 1 to 2 deaths per 100 person years for HIV positive persons who are housed.

Housing is a matter of life and death for people living with HIV/AIDS.

For more information on the Housing-HIV/AIDS connection [click here](#).

4. HUD Announces KDHAP-Special Needs Program

On December 1, 2005 HUD issued a Katrina Disaster Housing Assistance Program- Special Needs (KDHAP-SN) fact sheet outlining eligibility and enhanced aid for evacuees eligible for special needs assistance, including people residing in HOPWA programs immediately prior to Hurricane Katrina. The enhanced aid includes housing search, housing stabilization, service coordination and rental assistance for up to 18 months.

HOPWA grantees and project sponsors, along with Continuum of Care (CoC) homeless service providers, are asked to provide information within their networks about the enhanced assistance available through KDHAP-SN.

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[Click here](#) to view a fact sheet on KDHAP-SN.

5. New Research Summit Products Available to the Public

A variety of materials and products speaking to the Housing—HIV/AIDS connection from NAHC's successful National Housing and HIV/AIDS Research Summit (Spring 2005) have recently been released.

These tools are intended for use by providers and advocates across the country to educate staff, colleagues, funders, and especially local, state and federal lawmakers.

The following products are now available to the public:

- **[Research Summit Policy Paper](#)** (16 pages)
Titled "Housing is the Foundation of HIV Prevention and Treatment," the Policy Paper summarizes the purpose of convening of the Summit, the presented research, and outlines four imperatives for a focused advocacy agenda. Full citations included.
- **[Briefing Book](#)** (Approx. 450 pages)
NAHC is making available to the public, at cost or with a discount to members, the Briefing Book used by the researchers and policy experts at the Summit. The Briefing Book includes complete text articles of pertinent research relating to housing and HIV/AIDS,

copies of the researchers' Summit presentations, abstracts, fact sheets, and other related materials.

➤ **Summit Results PowerPoint**

The PowerPoint was prepared by Summit participants at the event and summarizes the presented studies, gaps in research, and ongoing challenges.

➤ **Fact Sheet**

This two-page fact sheet summarizing important housing and HIV/AIDS research is a useful advocacy and public-education tool.

The foundation of NAHC's policy recommendations and products is three research-based conclusions:

- Homelessness is a major risk factor for HIV, and HIV is a major risk factor for homelessness
- Housing is HIV Prevention
- Housing is healthcare for people living with HIV/AIDS

Visit the [Research Summit page](#) on the NAHC website for more information.

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6. Save-the-Date for Research Summit II

NAHC is pleased to announce plans for the National Housing and HIV/AIDS Research Summit II, coming in Fall 2006!

The Summit, to be held at John Hopkins University in Baltimore, MD, will be open to researchers, policy experts, clients of HIV/AIDS housing, advocates, and providers. NAHC is committed to continuing the dialogue begun at the first Research Summit regarding the relationship between housing status and HIV prevention and care.

Mark your calendars for RS II on **October 20-21, 2006!** More information regarding content and registration coming soon.

If you are a researcher or policy expert interested in submitting an abstract for RS II, please contact NAHC at nahc@nationalaidshousing.org or (202) 347-0333.

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7. Hill Staffers Learn the ABCs of SELHA

On December 2nd, 10 national organizations, including NAHC, hosted a

congressional briefing in the Capitol Building on the Services for Ending Long-Term Homelessness Act (SELHA). The well attended briefing provided an overview of the important SELHA legislation, introduced as H.R. 1471 and S. 709 (109th Congress).

SELHA would establish a grant program run under the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) at HHS to provide assistance, including mental health services, substance abuse treatment, health education, and primary health referral services, to those considered “chronically homeless.” This method of assisting high-need or multiply diagnosed homeless individuals has been shown to be extremely cost effective. The SELHA [bill summary](#) distributed at the briefing states, “research on public expenditures in New York City found that each unit of supportive housing saved over \$16,000 in emergency, public health, and shelter resources per year, almost entirely offsetting the cost of the supportive housing itself. Similar results have been discovered in cities around the country.”

Visit NAHC’s [Advocacy page](#) for more information about SELHA and other legislative priorities.

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8. Anti-Democracy Provision Mars Affordable Housing Fund Legislation

The victory for low income housing advocates in the adoption of the long sought Affordable Housing Fund in the Federal Housing Finance Reform Act (H.R. 1461) on October 26, 2005 was marred by the inclusion in the House-passed version of a provision that would bar any nonprofit from receiving funding under the Fund for low income housing development if it has have engaged in voter registration, other non partisan voter participation activities or lobbying within a year of applying for a grant. Such activities would be prohibited during the grant period even if funded by non-federal dollars. Even groups affiliating with organizations engaged in such activities would be restricted in applying for funding.

The Affordable Housing Fund is the latest iteration of the national housing trust fund which many AIDS housing providers have endorsed through the National Housing Trust Fund Campaign. The Trust Fund is designed to create a dedicated source of funding for primarily rental housing for extremely low income families. The successor Affordable Housing Fund would be funded by 5% of after-tax income from Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, the government sponsored enterprises.

The so called “non-profit” gag provision was promoted by the Republican Study Committee, a group of conservative House members, who feared money from the fund would be used for third-party advocacy beyond affordable housing, despite original bill language already barring such uses. Without the gag provision, the House leadership refused to allow the entire measure to come to the House floor for a vote. A procedural measure lead by Rep. Barney Frank – a motion to recommit the entire bill to the House Financial Services Committee for reconsideration – failed by a vote of 200-

220. H.R. 1461, which primarily imposes new regulatory requirements on the Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, was ultimately adopted by a vote of 331-90. Although no Senate action is planned, it is hoped that, if and when the measure is considered in the Senate, the anti-democracy restrictions will be removed.

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9. Housing Costs Still “Out of Reach” in 2005

Out of Reach, a yearly publication of the National Low Income Housing Coalition, was released to the public on December 13th. The report looks at housing costs and affordability across the country in 2005 and finds that an American worker must make an average \$15.78 an hour to afford housing across the nation (the National Housing Wage). For the first time the National Housing Wage was **more than three times the federal minimum wage**. The report also ranks states and metropolitan areas by Housing Wage and lists least affordable areas of the country.

To view affordability, housing costs, and housing wages for your state, county, or metropolitan area, visit *Out of Reach* online at

<http://www.nlihc.org/oor2005>.

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10. NAHC Goes to Cuba



Front: Brenda Malone (Doorways), Kathie Hiers (AIDS Alabama), Rita Perriera (Cuban

tour guide and a member of the Federation of Cuban Women) and Regina Quattrochi (Bailey House). Back: Don Maison (AIDS Services of Dallas), Cornelius Washington (Doorways), Eric Homer (Chicago Cares) and Arturo Valdivia Bendixen (AIDS Foundation of Chicago).

NAHC board members and Doorways (an Interfaith AIDS Residence Program) staff with their Cuban guide, Rita Pereira. The group visited the Cuba in early December to tour HIV/AIDS prevention, healthcare and urban planning facilities.

11. Join NAHC Online

The National AIDS Housing Coalition is now accepting organizational, corporate, and individual memberships for 2006. Support from members allows NAHC, which operates entirely on grants, donations, and dues, to continue representing the interests of AIDS housing on Capitol Hill and disseminating pertinent information to advocates, providers, and consumers across the country.

It is now possible to join NAHC ONLINE using your credit card!

Please visit our enrollment page at www.nationalaidshousing.org/join.htm to sign up.

Thank you for your support!

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12. Upcoming Events

January 26 – 27: National Alliance to End Homelessness conference on Ending Family Homelessness. Oakland, CA. Visit www.naeh.org for more information.

February 27 – 28: National Low Income Housing Coalition 2006 Annual Housing Policy Conference and Lobby Day. Visit www.nlihc.org for more information.

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**Happy Holidays &
Happy New Year from NAHC!**

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