



The E-Newsletter of the National AIDS Housing Coalition

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SUMMER 2006

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1. FY07 Housing Appropriations

HOPWA:

Congress may be on recess, but HIV/AIDS housing advocates are hard at work strategizing how to successfully increase FY07 funding for HOPWA....

On July 20, 2006, the Senate Appropriations Cte. voted to fund the HOPWA program at \$295 million for FY07; this is the same level the T/THUD Subcommittee approved during their mark-up two days before. Although this represents a \$9 million increase over FY06, it falls \$5 million short of the House passed level (6/13/06). The President also recommended funding HOPWA at \$300 million in his Budget Proposal released in February.

HOPWA supporter Senator Richard Durbin (IL) has conveyed that he will work to find a way for the final appropriation to match the higher, House-passed level. If the bill goes to the floor in the Senate (possibly as late as after the elections), an amendment may be offered to increase the HOPWA funding level by \$5 million. If the T/THUD bill never reaches the Senate floor, and is instead included in a large omnibus spending bill, supporters of the program will work to ensure that the Senate concede to the higher, House-passed level for the program.

Representative Jerrold Nadler (NY) has also worked tirelessly to ensure the highest funding level for the program and spoke about the value of the program on the House floor in June ([click here](#) to read a transcript of his statement).

NAHC will continue to inform our members and friends about movement on the appropriations bill. Be sure to watch for Calls-to-Action and other requests for assistance on HOPWA funding issues during the important final months of the legislative year.

So, what can you do now? **Recess is a great time to inform your members of Congress about the importance of HOPWA in your community while they are back in their home district (often working to get reelected!).** Call your members' offices and ask that they come visit your program in person to see how effective

HIV/AIDS housing is; if they can't attend personally, try to arrange an on-site meeting and tour with the staff members who handle housing issues. To find out how to reach district offices visit www.senate.gov and www.house.gov.

Other Important Housing Programs:

Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers. The House-passed Appropriations bill includes \$15.8 billion for tenant based rental assistance, including \$14.5 billion to renew existing contracts. The Senate Appropriations committee mark includes slightly more for the total account (\$15.9 billion) and slightly less (\$14.4 billion) for contract renewals. The Senate committee reported bill addresses a number of policy changes sought by low- income housing advocates including, positive changes to the funding formula that determines the amount of money each housing authority will have on an annual basis for voucher funding. Since 2004, the funding has been determined based upon a snapshot of three months during 2004 plus inflation in determining PHA voucher funding. The Senate committee abandoned this "snapshot" method for a new formula relying on PHA leasing rates and actual costs from the most recent twelve month period.

811 Housing for Persons With Disabilities. The Senate Appropriations Committee, like the House, rejected the administration's call to slash the program by more than half. Two-hundred and forty million is included in the House-passed bill and the Senate Appropriations Committee mark, \$3 million over the FY2006 enacted level.

Homeless Assistance Grants. The Senate Appropriations Committee mark includes \$1.5 billion for McKinney-Vento homeless assistance grants, including \$285 million for Shelter Plus Care renewals but no funding for the Samaritan Initiative, an unauthorized administration initiative which would combine permanent housing and case management targeted to the long-term chronically homeless.

Public Housing. The Senate Appropriations committee mark includes \$3.7 billion for public housing operating subsidies, \$96 million more than both the House passed bill and the Administration's budget request. It would also fund the HOPE VI program at \$100 million, \$70 million over the House-passed bill. The Administration proposed elimination of the program which is designed to revitalize severely distressed public housing developments.

Community Development Block Grants. The Administration's nearly \$3.03 billion proposed funding for CDBG was rejected in action so far in both bodies. Three point eight billion is recommended for formula grants and \$4.2 billion for the overall Community Development Fund.

For more specific information about FY2007 funding visit <http://www.nlihc.org/news/072106chart.pdf>.

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2. National Housing and HIV/AIDS Research Summit: Register Now!

Summit II - 2006: Transforming Fact Into Strategy - Developing a Public Health Response to the Housing Needs of Persons Living With and At Risk of HIV/AIDS

October 20th & 21st, 2006 - Mt. Washington Conference Center, Baltimore, Maryland

The National AIDS Housing Coalition (NAHC) invites you to participate in the second annual National Housing and HIV/AIDS Research Summit, a meeting of leading health, housing and social service researchers and policy makers, convened by NAHC in partnership with the Department of Health, Behavior and Society of the Bloomberg School of Public Health at Johns Hopkins University. The summit will be held October 20th and 21st, 2006, in Baltimore, Maryland.

- Please visit our [Research Summit II page](#) for more information.
- [Click here](#) to download a copy of the Summit II brochure.
- [Click here](#) for registration information and links to an online and PDF registration form.

Early registration ends September 15, 2006; register now to ensure that you receive group hotel rates and lower conference fees.

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3. Legislative Update: Hurricane Katrina and Housing

As the first anniversary of the horrific Hurricane Katrina approaches, a group of national low income housing groups are supporting enactment of legislation to prospectively address disaster response and seeking changes to extend its benefits to the thousands of Gulf Coast displacees who remain precariously housed. Senators Susan Collins (R-ME) and Joseph Lieberman (D-CT) introduced S. 3721, the Post Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006. The measure, reported from the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee on August 3 for possible consideration in

HIV/AIDS & Housing Facts of the Quarter:

One ongoing study of indigent women has examined a range of health risks, including violence, drug use, sex exchange and HIV, comparing homeless women in public shelters with a comparable group of very low-income housed women. Controlling for demographic and socio-economic characteristics, the study found that **homeless women were at much greater risk for all health problems examined, including HIV infection.**

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

Above statistic cited in NAHC 2006 [Policy Paper.](#)

September when the Senate returns from its summer recess, would strengthen the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and significantly revise the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (Stafford Act) which governs Federal assistance to State and local governments in the event of a federally declared disaster.

The chief focus of the bill is improved disaster planning. Among provisions of interest to housing providers, including those serving people with HIV/AIDS, is the requirement for the development and annual submission to the Congress of a Disaster Housing Strategy by HUD, FEMA and state and local governments. The roles, programs, authorities, and responsibilities of all entities that could provide housing assistance in the event of a disaster, including HUD, FEMA, the Department of Agriculture, Veterans Affairs and Health and Human Services, the American Red Cross and state and local governments would be defined. The Disaster Housing Strategy would also include programs to meet the needs of special needs and low income populations.

One concern among low-income housing groups is the failure of the measure to apply retroactively to survivors of Hurricane Katrina, including the potential impact of the end of eighteen months of assistance in March 2007. As the legislation moves forward, housing groups will seek improvements including legislative or administrative fixes that would extend the term of assistance. Housing groups will also seek congressional support to make selected provisions of the measure retroactive in order to assist Katrina survivors, including allowing disaster victims to use their cash assistance to pay utilities and improvements to FEMA's "shared households" rule which bars separate housing assistance to different, separate members of a pre-disaster household.

Other pending legislation related to Hurricane Katrina include the Natural Disaster Housing Reform Act of 2006, S. 2983 introduced by Sen. Mary Landrieu (D-LA) and its House counterpart, H.R. 5393, introduced by Reps. Baker (R-LA) and Frank (D-MA), which would make HUD the primary agency responsible for housing assistance in the event a disaster.

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4. Legislative Update: The Services to End Long-term Homelessness Act

The Services to End Long-Term Homelessness Act (SELHA) is a legislative initiative, proposed by the National Alliance to End Homelessness, Corporation for Supportive Housing, National Alliance for the Mentally Ill, The Enterprise Foundation, and NAHC, to fund

supportive services for the permanent supportive housing necessary to end long-term homelessness. The program would be targeted to serve the chronically homeless or long-term homeless population, many of whom are frequent users of emergency room care, have disabilities, histories of violence, and/or substance abuse issues. SELHA would fund services to assist these clients towards stable, permanent housing and self-sufficiency.

The Senate Appropriations Committee included, in their version of the funding bill for the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services and Education, \$10.56 million for services in permanent supportive housing to help end chronic homelessness. Additional language directs SAMHSA to use funding for services in permanent supportive housing to help end chronic homelessness. Permanent supportive housing – housing linked to services – is a proven and cost-effective approach that ends homelessness for the chronically homeless population.

So, what can you do now? **Call your member and request that Congress adopt the Senate Appropriations Committee funding level and accompanying report language that directs \$10.56 million for SAMHSA grants to fund services in permanent supportive housing projects.**

We gratefully acknowledge the National Alliance to End Homelessness for providing this information. [Click here](#) to visit their SELHA page for more information.

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5. Legislative Update: The Second Chance Act

As the time wanes to complete bills in the 109th Congress, progress has been made on moving the Second Chance Act, which provides comprehensive services for people leaving prisons and jails, including people with HIV/AIDS. Recent research indicates that prisoners have AIDS at a rate five times that of the general population ([click here](#) to view AIDS Housing of Washington's guide *From Locked Up to Locked Out*).

Although the housing specific measures are limited, H.R. 1704 currently with 112 co-sponsors and its Senate counterpart, S. 1934 with 28 cosponsors, would provide grants to states and local units of government to provide post-release housing and transitional housing, including group homes for recovering substance abusers. In addition, the measure would mandate a study of the barriers to admission to the federal low income housing programs for the formerly incarcerated. Certain convicted felons – for example, people convicted of drug-related offenses, sex offenders and those evicted from public housing in the past three years -- may be barred

from receiving subsidized housing.

The measure may move in both houses after the August recess. In the Senate, staffers are working to resolve concerns of certain Senators who are members of the Judiciary Committee. In the House Judiciary committee reported bill, efforts to resist the addition of faith-based language to the measure were successful. For more information about the Second Chance Act visit www.reentrypolicy.org and click on Re-entry Legislation.

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6. Legislative Update: The Ryan White CARE Act & Housing

Although final action for this congressional session is by no means assured, the House Energy and Commerce Committee and the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee are moving forward to finalize the bill. On Thursday, August 3, the Senate HELP Committee sent to bill forward for consideration by the full Senate with out a report. Efforts are continuing at the staff level to resolve outstanding issues, including those relating to the funding formulas. Procedurally, it is projected by committee staff that the House Energy and Commerce Committee will mark up the measure when the Congress returns from recess in September. Since the bill is being formulated in a bi-partisan, bi-cameral manner, the Senate will consider the House language as a manager's substitute. After House consideration, the Senate will act.

Although according to HRSA, 75% of Ryan White grantees use some small portion of their funding for emergency and transitional housing, in the reauthorized program these activities will not be considered a "core medical service" for the purposes of the 75% of grant funds devoted to such services. Housing need would, thus, be required to compete with other vital services for the 25% of grant funds not so designated. **The August recess provides a valuable opportunity to contact your member of Congress to let him/her know the importance of your access to CARE Act funding to support housing services is in your area.** Give concrete examples of housing programs and services that would be endangered or eliminated if CARE Act funds were not longer available. This is a serious risk to AIDS housing and clients; housing providers and advocates must engage in focused advocacy to ensure that transitional housing and other housing services are fundable through the CARE Act.

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7. New Feature! NAHC Member Profile: Clare Housing St. Paul, Minnesota

What do a North Dakota dive bar where kidnapping plots are hatched and a Minnesota HIV/AIDS housing residence have in common? Strangely, the same location! The King of Clubs bar, made famous by a cameo in the 1996 Oscar winning film *Fargo*, is actually located near Minneapolis, Minnesota and is now the site of an AIDS housing complex. According to Melissa Conway, Development and Communications Director at Clare Housing, following the filming, the NAHC member organization bought the bar and land and built in its place Clare Apartments, a 32 unit building partially constructed using HOPWA funds!

Founded in 1987, Clare Housing was the first housing program designated specifically for people living with HIV/AIDS in the Twin Cities. It has now grown to include six adult foster care homes and the Clare Apartments building. In total, the program houses 70 residents per year and the buildings serve both men and women who meet income requirements.

Residents of the foster home units are likely to be disabled and at risk of being placed in a nursing home. The Clare homes provide small, personal and less expensive care in a comfortable at-home setting. Personal attention is a hallmark of these units; four residents occupy each home and staff is on duty 24 hours a day. While it primarily serves people with HIV/AIDS, ten of these units are set aside for people who are disabled and homeless.

The Clare Apartment building consists of 16 studio units and 16 one bedroom units designed to serve clients who can function independently. The Apartments are funded by both formula HOPWA money and a competitive HOPWA award. A portion of the units are also funded through Section 8, requiring that residents pay 30% of their income toward rent.



Clare Apartments. Photo Courtesy of Lee Lewis and Clare Housing.
Photo credits: Aaron Holmberg

Lee Lewis, Executive Director of Clare Housing since 2002, has served on the Minnesota HIV Services Planning Council, the state-wide governing committee for the Health Information Management System, and chairs the Minnesota HIV Housing Coalition. He has been involved in HIV/AIDS issues for over twenty years and has extensive experience working in nonprofit organizations and as a lobbyist for non-profits at the State Capitol.

To find out more about Clare Housing, visit: www.clarehousing.org.

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8. Renew Your Membership or Join NAHC for Calendar Year 2007!

NAHC has begun registering members for calendar year 2007. If you are a current NAHC member, please remember to renew for next year (you should be receiving an invoice by mail soon, but you can renew right away). For the first time ever, you will now also be able to renew online using a credit card; visit

www.nationalaidshousing.org/join.htm.

New to NAHC? We are always looking to expand our membership and encourage you to consider joining. Here's what some members and friends of NAHC had to say when asked how information provided by NAHC has been useful to them:

- "Information and data from last year's Housing Summit was utilized in writing a successful HOPWA SPNS grant proposal in the fall of 2005, resulting in a \$1.2 million grant..."
- "As a consumer, information received from this website keeps me informed with on-going issues related to housing, grants, advocacy efforts within my community and helps me navigate housing issues in my own life".
- "We've utilized information received from NAHC to educate local politicians, government staff, as well as the general public about the issues people we serve face. Many times the groups that I represent have followed up with our state representatives regarding issues detrimental to those with HIV/AIDS."

Please visit the [Join NAHC](#) page on our website for more information, to download a PDF membership form, or to join online!

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