



HOUSE COMMITTEE CONSIDERS ROLLING BACK FY 2011 SPENDING TO FY 2008

LEVELS. On January 19 the House Rules Committee will hold a hearing on H.Res. 38, a resolution to set FY11 non-security spending at FY08 levels. Details will be determined as Congress considers funding for the remainder of the year after the current continuing resolution ends on March 4.

Because interest rates are lower now than in 2008, it would cost less to reach the same program levels for rural housing, so government spending (budget authority) for these programs could be reduced for FY11. Check <http://www.ruralhome.org> or <http://rules.house.gov> for updates. The FY12 funding process will begin when the Administration releases its budget proposals, expected to be during the week of February 14.

EPA OFFERS GRANTS TO BUILD CAPACITY TO ADDRESS CHILDREN'S ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH.

State and local governments, tribes, and nonprofits can apply by February 18. Projects should be multi-media (involving multiple environmental health hazards), holistic (involving multiple stakeholders and built on strong partnerships), and focused on underserved communities. Visit <http://www.grants.gov> or <http://yosemite.epa.gov/ochp/ochpweb.nsf/content/grants.htm>. Contact seikel.kathy@epa.gov.

USDA OIG CRITICIZES SECTION 502 GUARANTEE PROGRAM. On December 6, 2010 USDA's Office of Inspector General issued preliminary findings from an audit of Section 502 loans guaranteed with Recovery Act funding. Based on a sample of 100 loans, OIG estimated that 33% of the 81,000 loans made may have been ineligible for the program because borrowers' incomes were too high or too low, they already owned adequate homes, or they purchased homes with swimming pools. OIG also identified instances where agency policies and guidance were unclear, inadequate, or insufficient, and suggested that agency oversight might have been a contributing factor. USDA officials did not agree with OIG's conclusions for many of the loans it reviewed. The preliminary report is available at <http://www.usda.gov/oig/rptsauditsrhs.htm>.

HOMELESSNESS AND DOUBLED UP LIVING INCREASED FROM 2008 TO 2009. The National Alliance to End Homelessness studied state and national data, finding that the nation's homeless population increased by 3% – approximately 20,000 people – from 2008 to 2009. Increased numbers of people experienced homelessness in each of the subpopulations examined: families, individuals, chronic, unsheltered. The doubled up population (people living with family or friends for economic reasons) increased by 12% to more than 6 million people. *State of Homelessness in America 2011* is at <http://www.endhomelessness.org/content/article/detail/3668>.

USDA MULTIFAMILY PROPERTIES MAY ADOPT NON-SMOKING POLICIES. An Unnumbered Letter (Dec. 29, 2010) provides guidance to owners who choose to limit smoking. The UL is available from RD offices and posted at http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/RD_UnnumberedList.html. Contact Janet Stouder, RD, 202-720-9728. A similar HUD piece from September, PIH-2010-21, is at <http://www.hud.gov/offices/adm/hudclips/notices/hsg/10hsgnotices.cfm>.

REPORT SAYS PERMANENTLY AFFORDABLE HOUSING CAN ALSO HELP BUILD ASSETS.

Homeownership Today and Tomorrow: Building Assets While Preserving Affordability presents research showing how inclusionary housing, limited equity coops, and community land trusts can accomplish both goals and is available from the National Housing Institute at <http://nhi.org/go/Assets>. It is based on data presented in full in *Balancing Affordability and Opportunity: An Evaluation of Affordable Homeownership Programs with Long-term Affordability Controls*, available from the Urban Institute at <http://www.urban.org/sharedequity>.

HOUSING COUNSELING 101 PODCAST OFFERED. The National Foundation for Credit Counseling series is intended to help homeowners understand the use of housing counseling to avoid foreclosure. Visit <http://www.nfcc.org/housing/index.cfm>.

WEBSITE COVERS RECOVERY ACT IMPACT IN INDIAN COUNTRY. Created by the National Congress of American Indians, <http://www.indiancountryworks.org> provides information and links to news and data, as well as two 2010 NCAI reports on the Recovery Act's activities and remaining need.

SUCCESSFUL AFFORDABLE HOUSING COMMUNICATIONS DESCRIBED. *What Works and Why: Affordable Housing Communications Campaigns 2000-2010* describes 15 campaigns by advocates and government agencies to build public and political support for affordable housing and to counteract negative attitudes. The report is \$12.00 from the Partnership for Sustainable Communities at <http://www.p4sc.org/articles/category/54> or 415-453-2100.

HUD OFFERS EMAIL LISTS AND A NEW BLOG. Lists on multifamily property disposition, rural economic development, homelessness, lead based paint, and several other topics are open to the public. To sign up, visit <http://www.hud.gov/subscribe/>. A new blog, the HUDdle, is online at <http://blog.hud.gov>.