



HOUSE SUBCOMMITTEE HEARS TESTIMONY ON FY13 USDA RD BUDGET. The House Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture heard testimony March 1 from USDA Under Secretary for Rural Development Dallas Tonsager and the RD program administrators, including Tammy Treviño of RHS. Her written testimony focused on the importance of the Section 502 guarantee program and multifamily preservation. Responding to a question, she said a regulation allowing nonprofits to help package Section 502 loans is expected by the end of the year. Written testimony is posted at <http://appropriations.house.gov/Calendar/EventSingle.aspx?EventID=281477>.

HUD SPEAKS ON RURAL HOUSING. HUD Secretary Shaun Donovan included rural housing in written testimony on his 2013 budget for a March 1 hearing of the Senate Transportation-HUD Appropriations Subcommittee. He wrote that HUD provides rural funding in CDBG, HOME, Indian housing programs, and the Rural Housing Stability Assistance Program for the homeless. He did not point out that HUD's 2013 budget proposal zeroes out the Rural Innovation Fund and SHOP. The testimony (see p. 16) and a recording of the hearing are available at <http://www.appropriations.senate.gov/ht-transportation.cfm>.

FUNDS OFFERED FOR CNI PLANNING, SHOP, AND HMIS TA. For all NOFAs, visit <http://www.grants.gov> or <http://www.hud.gov/offices/adm/grants/fundsavail.cfm>. ♦ PHAs, tribal entities, local governments, nonprofits, and forprofits partnering with public entities can apply by May 1 for Choice Neighborhood Initiative Planning Grants to develop neighborhood transformation plans. Contact choiceneighborhoods@hud.gov. ♦ Self-Help Homeownership Opportunity Program funds will go to national and regional nonprofit organizations and consortia to support self-help programs. Apply by April 30. Contact Ginger Macomber, 202-402-4605. ♦ States, local governments, PHAs, nonprofits, and for-profits are eligible to apply by March 29 to assist Continuum of Care grantees with information management. Contact julie.d.hovden@hud.gov or Pat Felton, HUD, 202-402-2577.

RD PROVIDES GUIDANCE ON ENVIRONMENTAL DUE DILIGENCE. Administrative Notice 4621 (Feb. 9, 2012) explains environmental due diligence requirements for loan making and servicing, including servicing actions that may lead to foreclosure. Visit http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/rd-an_list.html or [contact an RD office](#).

HUD SEEKS COMMENTS ON RENTAL ASSISTANCE DEMONSTRATION. This new demo was included in HUD's FY12 appropriations law to test the conversion of public housing and other HUD-assisted properties to long-term, project-based Section 8 rental assistance. A notice of "Partial Implementation and Request for Comments" will be posted at <http://www.hud.gov/rad> and <http://www.regulations.gov> on March 8, with comments due in early April. Contact HUD, rad@hud.gov.

GAO SUGGESTS REDUCING DUPLICATION IN FEDERAL HOUSING PROGRAMS. An annual report on *Opportunities to Reduce Duplication, Overlap and Fragmentation, Achieve Savings, and Enhance Revenue* (GAO-12-342SP) lists 160 federal housing programs. It emphasizes the similarities between the Section 502 guarantee program and FHA programs and between USDA's and HUD's multifamily portfolio management. Visit <http://www.gao.gov>.

MORE WORKING HOUSEHOLDS SPENDING OVER HALF THEIR INCOME ON HOUSING. Nearly one in four working households spends more than 50% of its income on housing, according to the new *Housing Landscape 2012* report from the Center for Housing Policy, using 2010 American Community Survey data. Visit <http://www.nhc.org>.

CHILDHOOD POVERTY RATES EXAMINED FOR COUNTIES AND STATES. Child poverty in the U.S. increased dramatically between 2000 and 2010, with the largest increase in counties containing small cities (10,000-50,000 people), where the rate is now 25.1%, as reported in the *Daily Yonder*. The Annie E. Casey Foundation's Kids Count project examined American Community Survey data and found more children living in areas of concentrated poverty across the country in 2006-2010 than in 2000. State rates of children living in such areas ranged from 23% in Mississippi to 1% in Wyoming and Vermont. African-American, American Indian, and Latino children are between six and nine times more likely than white children to live in these communities. Visit <http://datacenter.kidscount.org> to read a summary and access data by state, county, city, or congressional district.

REGISTER NOW for *Housing Seniors in Rural America: Resources, Advocacy, and Practice*, to be held in Burlington, Vermont on June 5-6, 2012. This symposium will provide intensive training and information on housing for an aging population in rural America. Visit <http://www.ruralhome.org> or contact Janice Clark, HAC, janice@ruralhome.org.