



**PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES' AND PARTIES' POSITIONS LIMITED ON RURAL AND HOUSING.** *The candidates on rural issues:* On October 9 the Romney campaign released "[Agricultural Prosperity: Mitt Romney's Vision for a Vibrant Rural America](#)," which addresses taxes, trade, regulation, and energy as they relate to farmers and ranchers. The Obama campaign's web page entitled "[Rural America](#)" mentions agriculture, rural businesses, rural veterans, and energy and [another post](#) responds to Romney's rural paper. *The parties on rural issues:* The Republican platform discusses agriculture but does not include other rural issues. The Democratic platform mentions rural small business, education, and infrastructure – though not housing – in addition to agriculture and energy. *The candidates on housing:* Romney's white paper on housing, "[Securing the American Dream and the Future of Housing Policy](#)," covers the housing finance crisis and the Romney-Ryan plan to "revitalize the private sector's role in the housing market." The issues section of [Obama's campaign website](#) does not include housing, although a site search retrieved information about Administration initiatives on foreclosure and housing finance. *The parties on housing and poverty:* The [Republican Party platform](#) supports homeownership and mortgage finance reform, and acknowledges a role for government in "enforcing non-discrimination laws and assisting low-income families and the elderly with safe and adequate shelter, especially through the use of housing vouchers." Its anti-poverty plank calls for "the federal government's entire system of public assistance [to] be reformed to ensure that it promotes work." The [Democratic Party platform](#) supports homeownership and foreclosure relief, but does not mention rental housing. It states, "We must make ending poverty a national priority" through jobs, safety net programs, lending, an increased minimum wage, a strong labor movement, education, and attention to inequality. *The parties on Native peoples:* Both parties acknowledge the federal government's special relationship with American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians. Both support tribal self-governance and respect Native culture.

**USDA AND BIA COMMIT TO WORK TOGETHER FOR INDIAN COUNTRY HOUSING IMPROVEMENT.**

Two [Memoranda of Understanding](#), effective for five years, apply to housing as well as other rural development programs, farm programs, and conservation. They pledge better understanding and coordinated processes related to housing. Contact [Tedd Buelow](#), RD, 720-544-2911.

**CONTINUUM OF CARE COMMENT DEADLINE EXTENDED.** Interim CoC regulations were published [July 31](#) with comments due October 1. The deadline is now November 16. See [Federal Register, 9/28/12](#), or [regulations.gov](#). Contact Ann Marie Oliva, HUD, 202-708-4300.

**HUD REQUESTS COMMENT ON SMOKE-FREE POLICIES.** The department requests best practices and practical strategies from housing providers who have implemented smoke-free policies and input from housing providers that have decided not to implement such a policy and from those impacted by that decision. Comments are due November 5. See [Federal Register, 10/4/12](#) or [regulations.gov](#). Contact Shauna Sorrells, HUD, 202-402-2769.

**FY12 FAIR MARKET RENTS FINALIZED.** See [Federal Register, 10/5/12](#), or [HUDUser.org](#). Contact local HUD program staff.

**DIFFICULT DEVELOPMENT AREAS ANNOUNCED.** HUD designates DDAs for purposes of the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit. Adoption of small area DDAs (see [HAC News, 11/1/11](#)) has been delayed. Qualified Census Tracts for 2013 were designated in April 2012 (see [HAC News, 5/2/12](#)). See [Federal Register, 9/28/12](#) or [HUDUser.org](#). Contact [Michael K. Hollar](#), HUD, 202-402-5878.

**ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS PROVIDED ON RAD.** HUD's information is for PHAs and owners applying under the Rental Assistance Demonstration to convert public and assisted housing to long-term, project-based Section 8 rental assistance. See [Federal Register, 9/28/12](#), or [HUD's website](#). Contact [HUD RAD staff](#).

**POLL FINDS SUPPORT FOR MODIFYING MORTGAGE INTEREST DEDUCTION.** A [poll](#) conducted in August for the National Low Income Housing Coalition found that 56% of Americans favor replacing the mortgage interest deduction with a tax credit that would provide the same percentage benefit for all households regardless of income. Nearly two-thirds (63%) support capping the size of mortgage for which one can get a tax break at \$500,000. In

addition, 68% believe that not being able to find affordable housing is a large or very large national problem. Strong majorities support federal programs to build or rehabilitate affordable rental housing (69%) and federal programs to help low-income families pay their rent (59%). When asked how to use the savings the federal government would gain from the proposed modifications to the mortgage interest deduction, 63% of those polled would make ending homelessness a top or high priority use. Contact [Amy Clark](#), NLIHC, 202-662-1530, ext. 227.

**Housing Assistance Council**

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