



FUNDING GRIDLOCK LIKELY, GIVEN HOUSE REPUBLICAN BUDGET PROPOSAL. The [budget resolution](#) proposed March 20 by Rep. Paul Ryan (R-Wisc.) is expected to pass the House, setting spending levels for domestic programs well below the caps in the Budget Control Act (the August 2011 deficit reduction agreement). [Senate leaders plan](#) to apply the BCA limits. The differences will complicate passage of FY13 appropriations bills.

DONOVAN TAKES FY13 HUD BUDGET TO HOUSE SUBCOMMITTEE. HUD Secretary Shaun Donovan's written testimony prepared for the House Transportation-HUD Appropriations Subcommittee, like that offered to the Senate subcommittee earlier this month (see *HAC News*, [3/7/12](#)), included a section on rural housing. At the hearing, subcommittee chair Tom Latham (R-Iowa) asked about the elimination of SHOP funding in HUD's budget. Donovan said the department had to make hard choices to reduce spending, and self-help housing can be funded under HOME. Latham noted that the majority of SHOP borrowers are in rural places where it is more difficult to access HOME. Written testimony is posted at <http://appropriations.house.gov>.

SENATORS HEAR TESTIMONY ON INDIAN HOUSING. The Senate Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Committee held a hearing March 8 on the "Housing Crisis in Indian Country." Preparing for NAHASDA reauthorization in 2013 was a consistent theme. Written testimony can be viewed at <http://www.banking.senate.gov>.

SENATE PANEL HOLDS HEARING ON HOMELESS VETERANS. An archived hearing webcast and written testimony from a March 14 Senate Committee on Veterans Affairs hearing on "Ending Homelessness Among Veterans: VA's Progress on its 5 Year Plan" are available at <http://1.usa.gov/yFNLva>.

USDA OFFERS RCDI FUNDS. Intermediaries may apply for Rural Community Development Initiative grants to provide capacity building assistance. This year, some RCDI funds are available separately as part of the Rural Jobs and Innovation Accelerator Challenge (www.rurdev.usda.gov/RuralJobsAccelerator.html). May 9 is the deadline for both competitions. See *Federal Register*, [3/21/12](#), or <http://www.grants.gov>. Contact an [RD state office](#).

ACF FUNDING AVAILABLE FOR IDAS. The Administration for Children and Families will make Assets for Independence grants to community-based organizations to administer Individual Development Account projects. The deadline is May 25. Visit <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/open/foa/type/discretionary> or <http://www.grants.gov>. To register for a March 28 HHS webinar on rural IDAs, visit <https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/896750728>.

WATER/WASTE PRIORITY POSSIBLE FOR UNSERVED COLONIAS. Comments are due May 8 on a Rural Utilities Service proposed rule that would encourage use of the Section 306C Water and Waste Disposal Loans and Grants program for unserved colonias facing significant health risks. See *Federal Register*, [3/9/12](#), or <http://www.regulations.gov>. Contact Jacqueline M. Ponti-Lazaruk, RUS, 202-720-2670.

VETERANS VOUCHERS CLARIFICATIONS PUBLISHED. The March 23 *Federal Register* will include guidance on PHA administration of the HUD-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) program. See *Federal Register*, [3/23/12](#). Contact Michael S. Dennis, HUD, 202-708-0477 or a [local HUD office](#).

OPEN FORUMS OFFERED ON SECTION 538. To register for calls on USDA's rental guarantee program, contact Monica Cole, RD, 202-720-1251, <mailto:monica.cole@wdc.usda.gov>. See *Federal Register*, [3/20/12](#).

USDA DRAFT MPR AUTHORIZATION BILL MOVING FORWARD. USDA has sent a draft bill to authorize the Multi-Family Housing Revitalization Demonstration Program to OMB for review, reported RD staff in a March 15 call with stakeholders. They said the bill would allow use of MPR funds for preservation incentives currently authorized only through Section 515. The draft, promised by the Administration's FY13 budget, is not available to the public.

HUD ADDS TO GUIDANCE ON PROTECTING TENANTS AT FORECLOSURE. A new notice adds to previous guidance on the responsibilities of immediate successors in interest when a rented property is foreclosed. See *Federal Register*, [3/15/12](#). Contact James Hass, HUD, 202-708-1672.

CHANGES IN SECTION 538 HANDBOOK UNDERWAY. Revisions to RD's HB-1-3565, still in the clearance process, will add the continuous guarantee option now offered, and clarification on other topics. A summary and the revisions are posted at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/regs/pn/pn455.html> and have been incorporated into the handbook posted at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/Handbooks.html#hbw6>.

RENT STILL OUT OF REACH FOR MINIMUM WAGE EARNERS. The National Low Income Housing Coalition's annual *Out of Reach* report says there are still no counties in the U.S. where a minimum wage earner can afford a two-bedroom rental at HUD's Fair Market Rent. More than half of all American renters are paying more than 30% of their incomes for housing. Visit <http://nlihc.org/oor/2012> or contact NLIHC, <mailto:info@nlihc.org>, 202-662-1530.