



DEBT CEILING INCREASED WITHOUT OTHER CHANGES. No spending reductions or other trade-offs were included in the measure, signed into law by President Obama on February 15.

FY15 ADMINISTRATION BUDGET TO BE ISSUED IN TWO PARTS. Initial reports stated that detailed figures would not be available until March 11. According to Bloomberg, however, an OMB spokesman said that on March 4 the Administration will release proposals, agency-level information, and the comprehensive appendix that provides figures for every program. Historical tables and supplemental analyses will be released on March 11.

PRESIDENT REPEATS ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE COMMITMENT. A proclamation by President Obama recognizes February 11 as the twentieth anniversary of President Bill Clinton's Executive Order 12898 on Environmental Justice, renewing the federal pledge to address disproportionate environmental impacts on low-income and minority populations.

UPDATED INCOME LIMITS POSTED FOR USDA SECTION 502 DIRECT AND GUARANTEE PROGRAMS. Visit <http://eligibility.sc.egov.usda.gov> or contact a USDA RD office.

HUD ANNOUNCES FY14 AAFS FOR SECTION 8. Annual adjustment factors are used to calculate rent changes when Section 8 contracts are renewed. Contact information varies by program.

USDA RD OFFERS EMAIL INFORMATION ON SECTION 502 GUARANTEE PROGRAM. To receive *Countdown: 7 CFR 3555*, an email newsletter preparing for the September 1 effective date of the new interim final regulations (see HAC News, 12/18/13), and other email announcements, subscribe at <http://www.rdlist.sc.egov.usda.gov>.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT HOME PROGRAM UPDATED. HUD's HOME FAQs cover program requirements, CHDOs, homeownership, rental housing, and more.

RESOURCES AVAILABLE FOR COMMUNITY INTEGRATION OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES. The Community Integration Center at the Technical Assistance Collaborative provides an online library and also offers technical assistance to government agencies and others. Contact Kevin Martone, CICTAC, 617-266-5657, ext. 122, or send email through the organization's website.

WEALTH-BUILDING TAX INCENTIVES GO MOSTLY TO HIGHEST EARNERS. "Upside Down: Tax Incentives to Save & Build Wealth," a policy brief from CFED, reports that in FY13 the bottom 40% of earners received less than 3% of tax incentives related to investment, homeownership, retirement, and college. The paper includes recommendations for improving the incentives that reach lower-income families.

REPORT EXPLAINS USE OF SURPLUS PROPERTY PROGRAM. This Land is Your Land: How Surplus Federal Property Can Prevent and End Homelessness, published by the National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty, describes the impact of the McKinney-Vento Title V program, which allows vacant federal property to be used, free, by eligible groups to provide housing or services to homeless persons.

UPCOMING HAC EVENTS COVER ENERGY, 502, SENIORS, AND VETERANS

March 25-26: "Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Systems for Affordable Housing Development" in Memphis, TN, will cover energy efficient development practices and renewable energy technologies in rural affordable housing. The course will include site visits.

March 25-27: "Section 502 Packaging Training for Nonprofit Developers," held in Memphis, TN, will be an advanced course teaching participants to assist potential borrowers and to work with RD staff, as well as other nonprofit organizations, to deliver successful Section 502 loan applications.

April 9: "Serving Veterans in Rural America: A Symposium," held on Capitol Hill in Washington, DC, will draw attention to our rural veterans and showcase programs and initiatives that help with housing, health, and employment needs. Senior federal officials from HUD, USDA and VA are confirmed speakers.

April 22-23: "Housing Seniors and Veterans in Rural America: Preservation, Development, and Services," held in Phoenix, AZ, is targeted to rural housing providers. The agenda will feature discussions of federal and other housing programs for veterans and the aging, including home repair, rental housing, and services for the homeless. Successful best practices will be featured. Online registration will be available soon.