



Senate passes funding for USDA and HUD.

Both USDA and HUD were included in an FY19 appropriations measure passed on August 1 without changes to the housing program funding levels previously approved by the Senate Appropriations Committee. The Senate adopted an amendment telling USDA to report on its strategy for rental housing preservation. FY19 spending bills for both departments have been approved by the House Appropriations Committee, but not yet by the full House, which is now in recess until September 4.

Flood insurance program extended temporarily.

The National Flood Insurance Program has been renewed through November 30, the most recent of several short-term authorizations since the program expired last year.

Guide for California wildfires survivors published by HAC.

The newly published supplement to HAC's disaster guide provides resources for residents of fire-stricken areas. HAC's Picking Up the Pieces disaster guide offers broader information for residents and communities on short- and long-term resources in any disaster situation. Current information about specific fires is posted by Cal Fire.

HUD sets public housing rent limits.

The Housing Opportunity Through Modernization Act of 2016 requires PHAs to terminate tenancies or charge higher rents for over-income public housing households. HUD is adopting a calculation that would set income limits at 120% of area median income in most places and would be adjusted to account for high or low housing costs or a low state nonmetro median family income. Separately, HUD will propose a rule on how to set rents for over-income households. For more information, contact Todd Thomas, HUD, 202-402-4542.

RUS invites comments on broadband pilot.

USDA's Rural Utilities Service requests comments by September 10 on its implementation of certain provisions of an e-Connectivity Pilot program established in its FY18 appropriation. Loans and grants will be available for construction, improvement, and acquisition of facilities and equipment for broadband service. For more information, contact Michele Brooks, USDA, 202-690-1078.

Puerto Rico disaster recovery plan approved, hotel aid extended.

HUD announced on July 30 it has approved a \$1.5 billion plan for use of CDBG-Disaster Recovery funds to help Puerto Rico residents recover from Hurricanes Irma and Maria. Most of the funding will be used for the island's severely damaged housing. HUD has also published a Housing Damage Assessment and Recovery Strategies Report for Puerto Rico. Separately, a federal judge ordered FEMA to extend its Temporary Shelter Assistance program until August 31. A lawsuit is ongoing regarding a longer term extension of the program, which covers hotel costs on the U.S. mainland for Puerto Rican evacuees.

Government Effectiveness Advanced Research Center proposed.

OMB requests ideas by September 14 on establishing the GEAR Center, described as a "non-governmental, public-private partnership" to conduct research "that improves mission delivery, citizen services, and stewardship of public resources." OMB's notice identifies two "early focus areas": reskilling and upskilling federal employees and using federally owned data to help grow the economy.

Advocate identifies opportunity to comment on citizenship question proposed for census.

The Census Bureau requested comments by August 7 on how data products from previous decennial censuses have been used. Writing for The Nation, the Leadership Conference Education Fund suggests using this opportunity to convey opinions about the proposed addition of a question on citizenship to the 2020 Census.

HUD Inspector General criticizes department's oversight in Cairo, Illinois area.

An [Inspector General report](#) released on July 24 says HUD's Office of Public and Indian Housing knew since at least 2010 that the Alexander County Housing Authority had serious governance issues and public housing residents there lived in "deplorable" conditions, but did not take over ACHA until 2016. Alexander County, Illinois's southernmost county, is in the Mississippi River Delta and identified by the [Delta Regional Authority](#) as distressed. The report recommends actions to improve PIH's oversight of troubled PHAs. HUD agreed with the recommendations.

Inclusionary Housing Calculator explores local scenarios.

The online [calculator](#), created by Grounded Solutions Network with support from the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy and the National Housing Conference, allows users to select economic conditions and test potential incentives' impact on the development of mixed income housing.

Senate bill would establish housing task force.

The [Task Force on the Impact of the Affordable Housing Crisis Act](#), S. 3231, was introduced on July 18 by Senators Todd Young (R-IN), Maria Cantwell (D-WA), and Angus King (I-ME). It would establish a task force to evaluate the impact of a lack of affordable housing on other areas of life and the costs incurred by other programs resulting from a lack of affordable housing, as well as to make recommendations to Congress.

HAC offers Section 502 packaging training in September.

[This three-day advanced course](#) trains experienced participants to assist potential borrowers and work with RD staff, other nonprofits, and regional intermediaries to deliver successful Section 502 loan packages. The registration fee is \$750. The training will be held September 24-26 in Liverpool, NY. For more information, contact [HAC staff](#), 404-892-4824.

Deadline extended to nominate local and national leaders for HAC awards.

HAC is still accepting nominations for its 2018 Cochran/Collings National Service and Skip Jason Community Service Leadership Awards. The awards will be presented at the [2018 HAC Rural Housing Conference](#) in December. Past awardees are listed on [HAC's site](#). Complete the [online nomination form](#). For more information, contact [Lilla Sutton](#), HAC, 202-842-8600.

Save the date for the 2018 HAC Rural Housing Conference!

The [conference](#) will be held December 4-7 at the [Capital Hilton](#) in Washington, DC. The [HAC News](#) will announce when conference registration opens and when the hotel room block is available for reservations.

Need capital for your affordable housing project?

HAC's [loan funds](#) provide low interest rate loans to support single- and multifamily affordable housing projects for low-income rural residents throughout the U.S. and territories. Capital is available for all types of affordable and mixed-income housing projects, including preservation, farmworker, senior, and veteran housing. HAC loan funds can be used for pre-development, site acquisition, site development, and construction/rehabilitation. Contact HAC's loan fund staff at haclloanfund@ruralhome.org, 202-842-8600. *Please note: HAC is not able to offer loans to individuals or families. Borrowers must be nonprofit or for-profit organizations or government entities (including tribes).*