



Housing Assistance Council
HAC News

David Lipsetz named next HAC Executive Director. HAC's board of directors has named David Lipsetz to replace Moises Loza, who is retiring on November 1. Lipsetz held several senior positions at USDA and HUD, most recently as the Associate Administrator of USDA's Rural Housing Service.

Senate passes budget resolution. The Senate's version of H.Con.Res. 71, passed on October 19, calls for significant cuts in domestic discretionary programs, which include housing. The House earlier passed its own version (see HAC News, 10/5/17), supporting even deeper spending reductions. Both houses of Congress are expected to agree on a final version that will serve as a vehicle for tax cuts.

Disaster relief passes House. On October 12 the House approved \$36.5 billion in aid for hurricane recovery and efforts to fight wildfires. The Senate is expected to pass the bill, H.R. 2266, the week of October 23.

Carson testifies before House committee. HUD Secretary Ben Carson was the sole witness at an October 12 oversight hearing by the House Financial Services Committee. He emphasized his hope to increase private sector involvement in affordable housing.

USDA used all FY17 funding for Section 502 direct. The program made 7,187 loans totaling nearly \$1 billion in FY17, up from \$903.5 million (6,727 loans) last year. Very low-income borrowers accounted for 38.1% of the total Section 502 direct loan dollars. In the Section 515 Rural Rental Housing program, there were 31 loans totaling \$35 million. For the Farm Labor Housing programs, USDA obligated 21 loans totaling \$35.0 million and 6 grants. USDA obligated funds for 302,451 rental assistance units under the Section 521 Rental Assistance program, totaling \$1.37 billion. There were also 5,609 Rural Housing Vouchers totaling \$22 million. HAC's obligation report is available online.

Report finds large majority of distressed counties are rural. The Distressed Communities Index, a recent report from the Economic Innovation Group, measures distress at the zip code and county level based on metrics including median income, poverty rate, and housing vacancy rate. Among the findings: "Nearly 98 percent of distressed counties have fewer than 100,000 people and 90 percent have fewer than 50,000 people, making them overwhelmingly rural"; "distress is mainly urban in the Northeast and rural in the South, but prosperity tends to be suburban in every region." Interactive maps are also available online.

Social scientists consider "Rural Poverty in America." On October 19, the American Enterprise Institute and the American Academy of Political and Social Science hosted a panel discussion on rural poverty, now archived online. The July 2017 issue of the AAPSS Annals addresses "The New Rural-Urban Interface," with articles covering ethnorracial diversity, economic conditions, upward mobility of low-income youth, long-term poverty trends, political polarization, education, and more.

Mortgage interest deduction drives inequality and the racial wealth gap, report says. "Misdirected Investments," a publication by the Institute on Assets and Social Policy and the National Low Income Housing Coalition, offers ideas on reforming the mortgage interest deduction to expand opportunities for homeownership and promote more equitable benefits across all communities.

New tool measures neighborhood opportunity. Opportunity 360 is a platform created by Enterprise Community Partners that provides datasets, tools, case studies, and evidence-based methodology to measure basic indicators of well-being for residents in every community in the U.S. Users can access data for any census tract, region, or state. Enterprise suggests the data can be used to conduct needs assessments; build a case for certain investments or interventions; start a community conversation; or identify potential partners for delivering on programmatic priorities.

HAC publishes disaster guide supplement for California fires. A new supplement to HAC's disaster guide offers information for survivors of the wildfires.

USDA-RD releases Customer Service Information Guide. The guide, available in English and Spanish, provides information to homeowners about the Customer Service Center, where Section 502 direct loans are serviced. It supplies contact information, payment option information, and answers frequently asked questions.

UPCOMING HAC EVENTS

Affordable Housing Resources Development Best Practices, Challenges and Opportunities October 24, Decatur, AL

This comprehensive session will focus on examination of affordable housing and supportive services, particularly as they relate to rural development, with particular attention on addressing challenges, best practices and opportunities for greater collaboration – essential to the production, provision and sustainability of affordable housing. This event is sponsored by BBVA Compass Bank, who will also outline their housing products. For more information, contact [Shonterria Charleston](#), HAC, 404-892-4824. There is no registration fee, but advance registration is required.

Affordable Housing Solutions for Rural Veterans: A Symposium December 5, Washington, DC

The symposium will showcase model programs that are providing homeownership, home repairs, service to the homeless, and rental housing options. There is no registration fee, but space is limited and advance registration is required. For more information, contact [Shonterria Charleston](#), HAC, 404-892-4824.

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 hacloanfund@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).

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