



Housing Assistance Council
HAC News

Budget deal raises spending caps. The Bipartisan Budget Act of 2015 will add \$25 billion to the Budget Control Act's cap for non-defense discretionary spending in FY16 and \$15 billion in FY17. The House and Senate Appropriations Committees will divide the \$25 billion among agencies, so it is not yet clear how the increases will impact specific programs.

USDA has funds to renew expired Rental Assistance contracts. Using funds from the Continuing Resolution (see [HAC News, 9/30/15](#)), USDA is renewing RA contracts that have expired (not contracts that used up funds before their expiration dates). Renewals are for a full year, not just the term of the CR. Priority goes to those that expired after FY15 RA funds ran out in August. The agency is using a new RA Obligation Tool, which it expects will improve accuracy and reduce the number of RA contracts using up their funds before the end of their terms; each contract's funding will be based on that property's spending rather than a statewide average.

Senate subcommittee questions USDA on Rental Assistance funds. An [October 21 hearing](#), "Review of Rural Development in the 21st Century," covered many topics, including the FY15 shortfall in Section 521 Rental Assistance funding. Subcommittee chair Sen. Jerry Moran (R-KS) and ranking member Sen. Jeff Merkley (D-OR) were particularly surprised to hear RHS Administrator Tony Hernandez say the CR does not give it the authority to use FY16 funds to cover amounts not paid in FY15 to "re-renew" RA contracts that used up their dollars before they expired. (See [HAC News, 9/2/15](#) and [9/30/15](#).)

House panels hold hearings on new legislation and HUD. A subcommittee and the full Financial Services Committee considered "[The Future of Housing in America: Federal Housing Reforms that Create Housing Opportunity](#)" and "[The Future of Housing in America: 50 Years of HUD and its Impact on Federal Housing Policy](#)" on October 21 and 22. The subcommittee focused on H.R. 3700, which would make changes in many programs (see [HAC News, 10/14/15](#)), while the committee examined HUD's history and accomplishments.

HUD launches Tribal HUD-VASH program. The [program will fund](#) Indian tribes and tribally designated housing entities to provide rental assistance and supportive services to Native American veterans who are homeless or at risk of homelessness living on or near reservations or other Indian areas. Contact Randall Akers, HUD, 202-402-7914.

New Markets Tax Credits allocations available. Applications for [Calendar Year 2015 NMTCs](#) are due December 16. Applicants not yet certified as Community Development Entities must submit apply for CDE status by November 6. Contact the CDFI Fund's NMTC Program Manager, cdfihelp@cdfi.treas.gov, 202-653-0421.

CFPB updates lists of rural counties. The [Consumer Financial Protection Bureau's lists](#) of "rural counties" and "rural or underserved counties" identify areas where some mortgage activity regulations are waived.

Additional fair housing regulations proposed. [Comments](#) are due December 21 on HUD's [suggested standards](#) for evaluating complaints of quid pro quo harassment and hostile environment harassment. The proposed rule also clarifies the operation of traditional principles of direct and vicarious liability under the Fair Housing Act. Contact Lynn Grosso, HUD, 202-402-5361.

HMDA regulations revised. The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau has issued a [final rule](#) adding some new reporting requirements for Home Mortgage Disclosure Act data. There are other changes as well, and the rule also provides compliance guidance. Contact CFPB's Office of Regulations, 202-435-7700.

HUD offers training to qualify manufactured housing installers. [HUD training and licenses](#) are available in 13 states that do not operate their own installation programs. Contact Pamela Beck Danner, HUD, 202-708-6423.

New report supports HOME program. On October 28 the HOME Coalition released "[Building HOME: The HOME Investment Partnerships Programs Impact on America's Families and Communities](#)," analyzing HOME's economic impact at the national level and in all 50 states.

***Rural Voices* celebrates 20 years.** The Fall issue of HAC's quarterly magazine updates some of the more than 500 articles published since 1995. Sign up online for email notices when new issues are published.

Two HAC trainings offered November 19-20. The cost is \$75 each for these courses in North Charleston, SC. Register online for either Sharpening Your Skills: Financial Management for Rural Nonprofits or Utilizing the Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program: Creating and Preserving Affordable Housing. These are concurrent sessions; register for only one. Advance registration is required. Contact Shonterria Charleston,

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