



State Budget Accord Reached

Progress towards the passage of a New York State Budget for fiscal year 2009 continues at a very slow and unsteady pace. The budget is now four days late and there is every indication that the final agreement will not happen before the weekend. *Rural Delivery* finds that only three of the six principle budget bills have been printed, suggesting that there is agreement in only a limited number of areas.

The budget bill known as “TED” which addresses Transportation, Economic Development, Environmental Conservation and Housing has been printed, and therefore we assume that a three way agreement

is in place. Of particular interest to the rural housing community, it appears that Rural Preservation Companies are restored to 2008 levels. In order to fully restore RPC, the legislature, led by Senator Bonacic and Assemblyman Lopez, had to find resources to 1) restore the legislative add of \$1.5 million, 2) restore the \$128K that the Governor cut from RPC in the 2008 executive budget and 3) restore just over \$90K that Governor Paterson cut in his 2% across-the-board-cut to the “aid to localities” budget. NPCs are also restored to 2008 levels.

At this writing, we do not know of any agreement on additions to the

housing capital programs.

There are indications that the proposed Housing Opportunity Fund will not happen this year. There is however, much interest in the Legislature for increasing the existing capital programs. However, the legislature will negotiate capital separately from the cash portions of the budget.

Confused? You are not alone. We promise to do a bulletin just as soon as additional details come available.

[The publication of this issue of *Rural Delivery* has been delayed in the hope that accurate information on the 2009 budget would be available before we went to press. We appreciate our readers’ patience with our delayed delivery of this issue.]

HUD Secretary Resigns

HUD Secretary Alphonso Jackson announced on March 31st that he will be stepping down as the nation’s chief housing officer. Jackson will conclude his government service as the nation’s 13th HUD Secretary on April 18, 2008.

“During my time here, I have sought to make America a better place to live, work and raise a family,” said Jackson, who served as Deputy Secretary and then Secretary. “I take great pride in working alongside some of the most dedicated civil servants in America. The hardworking people at HUD make a difference in the lives of thousands of Americans daily. There comes a time when one must attend more diligently to personal and family matters. Now is such a time for me.”

Secretary Jackson first joined the Bush Administration in June of 2001 as HUD’s Deputy Secretary and Chief Operating Officer. He was unanimously confirmed as the nation’s 13th Secretary of HUD by the Senate on March 31, 2004. He is the only HUD Secretary to run a public housing agency and serve as chairman of a redevelopment authority.

In This Issue...

LIFE Conference.....	Pg 2
Mortgage Crisis Hearings Scheduled.....	Pg 3
AHC Officials Meet.....	Pg 3
NMTC Conference.....	Pg 4
Fair Housing Conference....	Pg 4
Fundraising Webinar.....	Pg 4
HTFC Changes OSC Pgms.	Pg 5
Peer To Peer Trainings.....	Pg 6
RESPA Reform Proposed....	Pg 7
USDA Income Limits Increased.....	Pg 7
Out of Reach Release Date Set.....	Pg 8

RD

Rural Delivery

Rural Delivery is published by the
New York State Rural Housing Coalition, Inc.

The Coalition is a non-profit statewide membership organization dedicated to strengthening and revitalizing rural New York by assisting housing and community development providers.

Officers:

Dale Prunoske, Chair
Ken Parrotte, Vice Chair
Roxanna Gillen, Secretary
Judy Eisgruber, Treasurer

Directors:

Mary Anderson
Kathy Disbrow
Deborah DeLong
Jeff Eaton
Anthony Fiala
Frederick Hanss
David Henderson
Kevin O'Connor
Peg O'Leary

Anne Patnode
Sue Reaser
Mark Sabella
Max Sammons
Carolyn Seymour
Linda Stratigos
Matt Taylor
David Valachovic
Barbara Willis

Staff:

Blair Sebastian
Executive Director

Colin McKnight
Deputy Director

John Grover
Supportive Housing Coordinator

Kate Mackey
Administrative Assistant

For more information contact the Coalition at:
879 Madison Avenue, Albany, New York 12208
Tel: 518/458-8696 * Fax: 518/458-8896



Bits and Pieces...

Streamlined RARP Application Delayed

According to sources at DHCR, the rollout of the planned streamlined application for the Rural Area Revitalization Program has been delayed. It is hoped that the new application form may be available on the DHCR website by mid-April. Originally, the rollout had been expected around the first of March. This application will not be able to be submitted online, at least initially. There will be an open window for submission of these applications.

LIFE Conference Scheduled

The statewide LIFE 2008 Conference (Low Income Forum on Energy) will be held on May 20th and 21st at the Marriott Albany Hotel. Conference registration is \$125 and \$145, and hotel rates are \$124 per night.

The conference will include workshops on consumer education, emerging energy issues, Community Action Program updates, and going green. For more information, contact Libby Belardi at (412) 431-5087, or visit www.lifenynews.org.

Workshops On Economic Development Slated

Our friends at the Neighborhood Preservation Coalition will sponsor a pair of roundtable workshops 'NEW RESOURCES FOR COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT' on Wednesday, May 16th in Rochester and Wednesday, May 23rd in the Bronx. The sessions run from 10:00 AM— 1:00 PM and are FREE of charge.

For more information on these and other workshops offered, visit www.npcnys.org/support/IE/roundtables2.pdf.

Federal and U.S. military employees can support the Rural Housing Coalition through the annual Combined Federal Campaign (CFC). If you are a federal government or military employee and would like to donate through the CFC, please enter CFC code #9614 on your pledge card during the next fund drive.

Mortgage Mess Continues To Get Federal Attention

The continuing expansion of the mortgage crisis and the recent bailout of a major investment bank by the Federal Reserve have increased pressure on Congress to act to stabilize the mortgage markets and the economy.

On April 9th, Representative Barney Frank, Chair of the House Committee on Financial Services, will begin two days of hearings on his draft “economic, mortgage and housing rescue proposal.” This proposal, which was released March 13th, would allow the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) to provide up to \$300 billion in new mortgage guarantees to help refinance at-risk single-family homeowners into viable mortgages; authorize the FHA to establish procedures to refinance loans on a bulk basis; and authorize \$10 billion in loans and \$5 billion in grants for the purchase and rehabilitation of vacant, foreclosed homes). Witnesses will include federal regulators, academics, economists, and representatives of the cities and communities that are being negatively impacted by high numbers of foreclosures. The Financial Services Committee is expected to markup the bill the following week, and the House may complete action on the bill by the end of April.

Senator Christopher Dodd, Chair of the Senate Committee on Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs, has also announced a foreclosure mitigation bill, “HOPE for Homeowners Act of 2008.” This proposal provides for FHA refinancing of loans for homeowners facing difficulty meeting their mortgage payments, and includes a new foreclosure pre-

vention affordable housing goal for Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. The proposal does not mention the use of bulk or auction sales or loans or grants for the ultimate purchase or rental of foreclosed homes. No hearings have been scheduled in the Senate.

These measures are in addition to other actions being considered by Congress including FHA modernization, modernization of the regulatory structure for Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae and legislation to prevent a reoccurrence of the lending problems in the subprime market that contributed to the current foreclosure crisis. FHA modernization bills have passed both the House and the Senate. The House also passed HR 1427, GSE reform legislation, on May 22, 2007, and HR 3915, the Mortgage Reform and Anti-Predatory Lending Act of 2007, on November 15th. The Senate has not acted on GSE reform or anti-predatory lending legislation. In addition to proposals that directly address issues in the mortgage market, Mr. Frank has proposed extensive reforms to the overall financial system in the United States. In a speech to the Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce on March 20th, Mr. Frank called for the establishment of a financial services systemic risk regulator with the capacity and power to assess risk across financial markets regardless of the corporate structure of the financial entity. He also suggested that consumer protections should be enhanced because “consumer protection, safety and soundness and systemic risk are intertwined.”

AHC Officials Meet With Program Users To Discuss Changes/Improvements

Representatives of the Rural Preservation Program, the Neighborhood Preservation Program, the Rural Housing Coalition and the Rural Advocates met with officials from the NYS Housing Finance Agency on March 24th to discuss a variety of issues related to ease of use of the Affordable Housing Corporation’s (AHC) funding program. The discussion covered practical issues such as making the application forms fillable online (that is expected for upcoming application deadlines), financial issues such as provision of administrative fees, or modification of match requirements (which can only be changed through modification of the statute), and operational issues such as alternative methods of recapture, and using AHC funds for purchase assistance without any rehabilitation.

AHC staff noted several recent changes, including the removal of the previous \$300,000 limit for home improvement grant requests. Staff also suggested that the signage requirement could be waived, so that program sponsors no longer have to worry about carting around a four by eight foot sign. AHC officials also noted that AHC funds could be used in a mixed use structure (such as those found along many rural Main Streets) if costs were appropriately tracked and AHC funds were segregated in the owner-occupied residential portion of the project, or covered only the proportion of common systems reflecting the residential usage of the building.

Conversations between program users and AHC staff will continue to take place in the future.

Save The Date! October 29th, 30th, and 31st. The 29th Annual Affordable Housing and Community Development Conference will be held in Buffalo, New York.

New Markets Tax Credit Conference

The Reznick Group's 2008 NMTC Summit will take place on April 16th-18th, at the InterContinental Hotel, in downtown Miami. Last year this event set a new attendance record and this year, the sponsors are already sold out of the room block for this event at the conference hotel.

The New Markets Tax Credit is a source of capital for creative community development and housing projects. These resources can be accessed through intermediaries, or direct application to the US Treasury Department.

The Reznick Group has secured accommodations at an overflow hotel. Additional rooms have been reserved at the Hyatt Regency Miami, at the Miami Convention Center located only minutes away from the summit location. To guarantee the group rate of \$199.00, early reservations are recommended. In order to book rooms, call (800)233-1234. The room block group name is Reznick Group, PC. To review the conference agenda, visit <http://guest.cvent.com/EVENTS/Info/Agenda.aspx?i=165c5449-de98-4422-a9d6-181f7f6c8d25>. Online registration for the conference is available at www.reznickgroup.com.

An online seminar on April 9th will focus on how to maximize efforts to raise funds for your programs from first time donors. "The Search for Sneezers: How To Find First-time Donors In Epidemic Proportions" is sponsored by the Non-profit Times and Advanced Solutions International.

The training will begin at 1:00 PM and will be led by Philip King,

Senators Circulate Letter Supporting Rural Housing Funding

Senators Charles Schumer and Olympia Snowe are circulating a sign-on letter among other Senators, urging the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture to fund USDA Rural Development housing programs that received significant cuts or were eliminated in the Administration's FY09 budget request. The letter requests specific funding levels for the Section 515 rural rental housing program (\$150 million), Section 502 direct loans (\$1.5 billion), USDA Self Help Housing (\$60 million), Section 514 and 516 farm labor housing programs (\$50 million each), and the Rural Community Development Initiative (\$10 million). A letter with a similar message circulated in the House during the week of March 21st.

Senators have until noon on April 4th to join this letter. Senate offices can call Daniel Schneiderman in Senator Schumer's office [(202)224-6542] or Gregory White in Senator Snowe's office [(202)224-5344] to sign on to the letter. The letter is available at www.nlihc.org/doc/FY09-Senate-Rural-Housing-Sign-On-Letter.pdf.

President of Artez, and Anna Carbonara, of the American Marketing Association.

The session will present a series of case studies from the US, UK, Canada and Australia that showcase best practices of online fundraisers, and demonstrate how any organization can get more from their volunteers. Session attendees will learn:

1. Best practices in online fund-

Fair Housing Conference Slated

The 2008 National Fair Housing Policy Conference will be held from April 8, 2008 - April 11, 2008. The conference, which celebrates the 40th anniversary of the Fair Housing Act's passage, invites policymakers, advocates, housing-industry professionals, media professionals and academics to come together to address many fair housing issues we face today. The general sessions and breakout sessions are designed to discuss new strategies of fair housing enforcement to counter predatory lending, promote disability rights and accessibility requirements, foster diverse communities, broaden economic opportunities, and reduce the wealth gap in America. The goal of the conference is to remember where we started, to celebrate 40 years of successes, and to march forward towards the future in ensuring justice and housing opportunities for all Americans.

The conference will be held at the Hilton Atlanta, 255 Courtland Street NE, Atlanta, Georgia 30303. For reservations, phone: (404) 659-2000. For more information, visit: www.fheopolicyconference.com/ or by email: fheopolicyconference@dixongroup.com.

April Is Fair Housing Month

raising;

2. New models and frameworks to apply to their own organization;
3. New ways to take advantage of social network sites such as Facebook.

For more information, or to register for the free(!!!) online training, visit www.iiian.ibeam.com/events/amaa001/25846/?adid=npt.

Free Webinar On Online Fundraising Offered

Career Opportunities

Housing Choice Voucher Coordinator

Housing Voucher Coordinator: FT; Housing Choice Voucher Program, responsibilities include program management, reporting & monitoring service performance. For more detailed job description access www.tcaction.org. Mail, fax, or email resume w/cover letter to HR Director, TCAction, 701 Spencer Road, Ithaca, NY 14850; Fax# (607) 273-3293; email: jobs@tcaction.org Please reference position in cover letter. Applications accepted until 4/11/08. AA/EEO. Minorities are encouraged to apply.

Program Manager

The Neighborhood Preservation Coalition of NYS seeks a Program Manager. The successful candidate will be responsible for managing all existing contracts of the organization and providing technical assistance and training on a variety of organizational development issues. Excellent oral and written communication skills, excellent computer

Director of Domestic Violence Intervention and Family Services

ComLinks, a not for profit Community Action Partnership in Northern New York, seeks a dynamic team leader with administrative experience to be responsible for a staff of 15 in the Domestic Violence Intervention/Family Services Program.

- Plan, direct and administer all aspects and programs of residential and non-residential client services.
- Ensure all goals/objectives of performance based contracts are met.
- Secure funding; ability to write grants a plus.
- Responsible for program fiscal operation and budget planning.

skills including experience designing and producing materials and reports, and the ability to manage multiple projects & meet deadlines are necessary. Familiarity with community development/ housing data and its application, in addition to familiarity with Federal and State affordable housing programs a plus. Bachelor's Degree in related field

- Collaborate with local community and state agencies to establish partnerships and design strong family support services.

Candidate must have strong management, budgeting, supervisory and team-building skills. Bachelor's Degree in Human Services and 5+ years supervisory and management experience in human services preferred.

Send cover letter with resume and 3 references to:

ComLinks, 343 W. Main St., Malone NY 12953 or e-mail to: info@comlinkscas.org. EOE

required. Competitive salary, commensurate with experience, health insurance and other benefits available. Position available immediately. Send letter and resume to Joe Agostine, Jr., Executive Director, NPC of NYS, Inc., 40 Colvin Ave., Suite 102, Albany, NY, 1 2 2 0 6 , or email to agostine@npcnys.org.

EOE

Housing Trust Fund Meeting Brings Changes To DHCR Programs

At the Board meeting of the Housing Trust Fund Corporation on March 25th, a number of actions were taken that will affect rural community development programs. The Board adopted a resolution renaming the Office of Small Cities as the "Office of Community Renewal". The name change is necessitated in part by the relocation of the NY Main Street program and staff to the OCR, and the fact that Main Street programs can be located in communities that are not eligible for the Small Cities program.

Among other business, the HTFC also approved a resolution funding 6 economic development Small Cities projects located in various upstate communities, as well as 21 Small Cities Technical Assistance Planning Grants. The Planning Grants totalled \$473,000.

Joseph Rabito gave a presentation on the expected CDBG funds that would be available in 2008. After other expenses, including a set-aside for economic development projects, Mr. Rabito anticipated that \$30 million would be available for

competitive Small Cities projects in 2008.

Mr. Rabito noted that the relocation of the OSC/OCR staff to new offices at Hampton Plaza was proceeding with little disruption of assistance to communities or monitoring of existing projects.

Gary Hallock reported that the electronic submission process for project applications this year had gone well. Approximately 70% of the applications received in this round were submitted electronically.

Peer To Peer Trainings Scheduled

Rural Preservation Company staff and their community partners are invited to attend the upcoming Rural Housing Coalition-sponsored Peer To Peer training sessions that will be held in 6 regional locations across the state in April and May. The sessions will include presentations on what companies can expect as changes to DHCR's requirements resulting from the Review and Reform process, including an update on the Preservation Company Certification process, expected training opportunities, and understanding minimum requirements for continued participation as an RPC.

The Peer To Peer trainings will be held on April 9th in Beacon, April 30th in Stamford, **May 6th in Ticonderoga, May 13th in Fulton**, May 27th in Olean, and May 28th in Big Flats. Each session will run from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM. Lunch will be provided. Attendees are encouraged to bring a community partner (lender, developer, municipal or county planning official) to help illuminate the discussion. In addition to the update on Review and Reform, the discussion will include topics of local/regional import. Attendees will receive the report of the 2007 peer to peer trainings at these sessions.

Registration materials for the Beacon, Stamford, Olean, and Big Flats meetings have already been mailed. Separate registration materials for the Ticonderoga and Fulton meetings are now in the mail. Anyone needing an additional copy of the registration materials by email should contact Kate Mackey at kate@ruralhousing.org.

Congress Fights Federal Rural Budget Cuts

Forty members of Congress sent a letter on March 18th supporting funding for federal rural housing programs to the chair and ranking member of the *House Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, FDA and Related Agencies*, Representatives Rosa DeLauro and Jack Kingston, respectively. The letter also urges the appropriations committee to reject the Administration's request for deep rural housing budget cuts in FY09. The letter was organized by Representative Ruben Hinojosa, who chairs the Rural Housing Caucus in the House.

According to the letter, the "Administration's budget for FY09 decimates existing direct lending programs for rural housing, rescinds FY08 funds and eliminates future funding to revitalize rental housing and proposes to increase fees on borrowers for guaranteed loans."

Noting that federal funding for rural housing and community development programs has been reduced by more than 20% over the last six years, the letter urges the subcommittee to adopt specific funding levels for several rural programs. The letter recommends \$1.5 billion for direct homeownership loans, \$35 million for home repair 504 loans, \$100 million for direct rural rental housing loans, \$60 million for self help housing grants, \$50 million for farm labor housing loans and for grants, \$10 million for the rural community development initiative, and \$50 million for multifamily housing revitalization.

The letter is available at www.nlihc.org/doc/March18-OmniRuralHousingApprovsRequest.pdf.

RESPA Reform Cont'

Continued from Page 7, Col. 3

consumer testing found borrowers appreciated the enhanced disclosures, believed the loan details on the closing scripts were clear and understandable, and reacted positively to having the scripts read out loud.

To further bolster consumer protection and to ensure uniform and consistent enforcement of RESPA, HUD intends to seek legislative changes to the Act that will complement the regulatory improvements made by the rule. Currently, RESPA does not provide HUD with enforcement mechanisms for some of the most important consumer disclosures and protections. A lack of enforcement authority and clear remedies for violations of critical sections of RESPA negatively impact consumers and diminish the effectiveness of the statute.

HUD will seek the authority to impose penalties for violations of specific sections of RESPA, including Section 4 (provision of uniform settlement statement); Section 5 (GFE and settlement costs booklet); Section 6 (loan servicing); Section 8 (prohibition against kickbacks, referral fees, and unearned fees); Section 9 (title insurance); and portions of Section 10 (regarding escrow accounts). In addition, HUD proposes the authority for the Secretary and State regulators to seek injunctive and equitable relief for violations of RESPA; require delivery of the HUD-1 to the borrower three days prior to closing; and establish a uniform statute of limitations applicable to governmental and private actions under RESPA.

To read the full text of HUD's proposal, visit www.hud.gov/offices/hsg/sfh/res/respa_hm.cfm.

USDA Income Limits Increased

The US Department of Agriculture Rural Development agency announced on March 19th that it has established new area income limits for its direct and guaranteed home loan program in New York State. The limits are effective immediately.

The 2008 area income limits have increased, or remained steady, in every eligible county and metropolitan area. A complete list of area income limits can be found at www.rurdev.usda.gov/rhs/common/indiv_intro.htm or by contacting a local service center. Service center contact information is provided at the USDA website.

“Our 2008 area income limits have been designed to help deserving rural New Yorkers become home owners,” said Patrick H. Brennan, State Director for USDA Rural Development in New York. “I encourage anyone interested in this program to contact a local USDA Rural Development Service Center to find out how we can help you.”

USDA Rural Development’s direct home loan program helps very-low to low-income families and individuals buy, build or improve homes in rural communities. The guaranteed home loan program is designed for low- to moderate-income families and individuals whose income is too high to qualify for the direct program. The programs require no down payment and provide additional costs savings by eliminating private mortgage insurance (PMI).

Further information on rural programs is available by contacting the State Office at (315) 477-6400 or by visiting USDA’s web site at www.rurdev.usda.gov/ny.

HUD Proposes RESPA Reforms

In an effort to significantly improve the complicated, unclear and costly homebuying process, U.S. Housing and Urban Development Secretary Alphonso Jackson proposed on March 14th mortgage reform designed to help consumers better understand their loan terms so that they can shop more effectively for the largest purchase of their lives.

HUD’s proposal reforms the more than 30-year old rules of the Real Estate Settlement Procedures Act (RESPA), and improves disclosure of the loan terms and closing costs consumers pay when they buy or refinance their home. For the first time ever, HUD is proposing that mortgage lenders and brokers provide consumers with a standard Good Faith Estimate. By more openly disclosing the key elements of the loan and by controlling fee inflation, the Department seeks to provide consumers with enough information to allow them to shop more effectively for the lowest cost loan. HUD’s economic analysis finds that by offering consumers clearer, more certain cost estimates, the average borrower will save nearly \$700.

“A lot of the mortgage problems we see today are directly related to the fact that few people fully understand this process,” said Jackson. In light of recent increases in loan defaults and foreclosures, the need for reform is imperative.

HUD is proposing to offer consumers a standard Good Faith Estimate (GFE) that will substantially enhance disclosure of all important aspects of the loan, including: The interest rate and monthly payment; Whether the interest rate and principal balance can increase and by

how much; and

Whether the loan has a prepayment penalty or balloon payment.

The proposed Good Faith Estimate would consolidate closing costs into major categories to prevent “junk fees” and display total estimated settlement charges prominently on the first page so the consumer can easily compare loan offers. In addition, HUD’s new proposed rule would specify the charges that can and cannot change at settlement. If a fee changes, HUD proposes to limit the amount it can change. HUD also proposes to modify the HUD-1 settlement statement to help consumers compare the anticipated charges on the Good Faith Estimate and their actual charges.

The Good Faith Estimate would also require that lender payments to mortgage brokers (often called Yield Spread Premiums) be disclosed. It is HUD’s belief that these payments are directly dependent on the interest rates that consumers agree to and therefore ought to be disclosed. To ensure that HUD’s new proposal would not create a consumer bias against brokers, the Department did rigorous consumer testing and found the proposed Good Faith Estimate helped consumers to select the lowest cost loan more 90 percent of the time, regardless of whether the loan was originated by a lender or a broker.

Finally, HUD is proposing that settlement agents read a “closing script” to borrowers at the settlement table and that a copy be provided to the borrower. This closing script would ensure that the settlement agent not only compares the borrower’s estimated and actual charges, but would detail the key terms of the loan. HUD’s extensive

Out of Reach to be Released April 7; Advocates Invited to Participate

The National Low Income Housing Coalition will release ***Out of Reach 2007-2008*** on Monday, April 7th. *Out of Reach* provides advocates with data on the cost of rental housing in every county, metropolitan area, and state in the country. The report's signature statistic – the Housing Wage – calculates the hourly wage that a household must earn working full-time in order to afford a modest apartment at the local Fair Market Rent. *Out of Reach* compares the Housing Wage to the minimum and average wages of renters, illustrating the stark contrast between what renters can expect to earn, and what they need to earn to afford local rents.

NLIHC will release the report during a national conference call

for members of the media at 11:00 AM on April 7th. At the same time, all advocates are invited and encouraged to schedule local media events around the publication's release, as a way to localize the national housing crisis. If your organization is interested in releasing the data locally, NLIHC staff will provide you with your local data, a sample press release, and any other information you need. NLIHC outreach staff can also assist in contacting local media and helping prepare for press events.

To participate, contact your outreach associate as follows: Elisha Harig-Blaine for those in the Mid-west and Northeast (elisha@nlihc.org; 202-662-1530 x316); Jake Kirsch for those in the North-

west and Southeast (jake@nlihc.org; x244); and Christian Pulley for those in the Mid-Atlantic and Southwest (christian@nlihc.org; x247).

New Improved
Visit our ▲ website at
www.ruralhousing.org!!!!

*can you tell that
we're excited about it?*