



## House Passes HUD/Transportation Funding Bill

The House of Representatives passed the FY 2010 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development appropriations bill (HR 3228) by a vote of 256-168 on July 23rd. The bill provides \$47 billion for HUD, including \$8.7 billion for Section 8 project-based rental assistance and \$18.2 billion for Section 8 tenant-based vouchers.

In addition, HR 3228 allocates \$2.5 billion for public housing authorities to make critical repairs and improvements to public housing units; \$4.8 billion for public housing maintenance, crime prevention,

and energy expenses; \$1 billion for housing for the elderly (\$235 million more than the President requested); \$350 million to build housing for the disabled; \$1.85 billion for grants to local communities to provide housing and services for the homeless (an increase of \$173 million over the current year, which is expected to fund new competitive projects); \$350 million for HOPWA; \$70 million for housing counseling (\$30 million less than the President requested, but \$5 million more than was funded in 2009); \$4.6 billion

for Community Development Block Grants (an increase of \$725 million above the 2009 funding level); \$25 million for brownfields redevelopment; \$250 million for the HOPE VI program (\$130 million more than 2009); \$150 million for the Sustainable Communities Initiative to provide grants to assist local communities with integrated housing, transportation and energy planning efforts. This program is included within the CDBG program.

The Senate will begin mark-up of their draft Transportation-HUD bill shortly.

### Governor Signs Historic

### Preservation Tax Credit Enhancement

Governor David A. Paterson signed legislation to strengthen the New York State Historic Preservation Tax Credit, improving a program that will stimulate investment in urban neighborhoods, create jobs, increase property values and revitalize historic areas. The Governor held a ceremonial bill signing at the Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society and was joined by members of the Senate, Assembly and community. The rehabilitation tax credit program provides incentives to developers, municipalities, businesses and residents to make investments in distressed areas by rehabilitating historic properties that are listed on

that are listed on the State and National Registers of Historic Places. Historic preservation efforts play an important role in smart growth community renewal. Preservation efforts have proven to create jobs, attract small business, increase property values and promote affordable housing. In addition, historic preservation works to enhance the quality of life in historic urban neighborhoods by maintaining the distinctive culture and character of the area.

While New York's preservation tax credit was adopted in 2006, the program did not provide adequate incentives to attract sufficient in-

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**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.

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**Bits and Pieces...**

**Rural Advocates Asks You To Save the Date!**

Please put October 28-29th on your calendar for the next Rural Advocates Annual Meeting at the Otesaga Hotel in Cooperstown. More information will follow.

**Conference Advertising Requests Out**

Letters offering advertising opportunities in the Rural Housing Coalition's 30th annual Affordable Housing and Community Development Conference program were mailed last week. If you are interested in putting your name out in front of the leaders and decision makers in New York's rural community development industry, be sure to respond to this mailing before the end of August. If you did not receive the mailing and would like more information about this promotion opportunity, please call Kate Mackey at the Coalition at (518) 458-8696 ext. 10 for assistance.

**Grantwriting Training In Buffalo**

The Grantsmanship Center's Grantsmanship Training Program is coming to Buffalo, New York, September 21-25, 2009. The program will be hosted by The Salvation Army. For more information, call The Grantsmanship Center's Registrar at (800) 421-9512.

**Entries Sought for 14th Annual MetLife Foundation Awards for Excellence in Affordable Housing**

Grants of \$50,000 will be awarded to nonprofits and tribes/tribally-designated entities working to increase affordable independent housing for seniors and environmentally responsive housing in their communities. The deadline for applications is August 14, 2009. For more info, visit [www.enterprisecommunity.org/programs/awards\\_and\\_fellowships/awards/metlife\\_foundation\\_awards/](http://www.enterprisecommunity.org/programs/awards_and_fellowships/awards/metlife_foundation_awards/).

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.

## August Training Academy Slated

Each year, the Rural Housing Coalition offers an in-depth training opportunity for upstate affordable housing providers and community development professionals. This year, we are pleased to present seminars on topics that will be on most of our agendas in the next year: Purchase/Rehab/Resell programs for foreclosed or deteriorated housing stock; and Preservation and Rehabilitation of Affordable Rental Complexes that are at-risk for redevelopment as market rate apartments.

The August Training Academy is your opportunity to learn new skills in a relaxing riverfront setting. Enjoy downtown Rochester and learn valuable information to begin new programs in your agency.

This is a free training event. Lunch and lodging expenses are the responsibility of attendees. A block of hotel rooms is being held at the special price of \$101. Call the Radisson Hotel directly at (585) 546-6400 to reserve your room. Mention that you are attending the NYS Rural Housing Coalition training to secure this special rate.

The training workshops at the Academy are:

*Tuesday, August 11, 2009*

**HOME Program Basics for regulatory compliance.** This session will focus on the eligibility of project types, eligibility, allowable costs and compliance period.

**Models, Factors To Consider, and Challenges of Buy/Rehab/Resell Housing Programs.** A discussion of three models along with the factors and challenges to be considered in operating an Acquisition/Rehab/Resale program and what expectations you should have from the impact of your work.

**Key Elements in the Process.** Development of the key pieces of the program - including the inspection, the work scope and cost estimate, development of the pro-forma, bidding, contracts and construction management.

**Sustainability & Preservation.**

What are the expected outcomes and potential benefits of an energy audit – where do you get the biggest bang for your buck? Incorporating sustainable (“green”) building practices into your program – how to get there, what to expect, thinking reuse and rejuvenate, and what makes (common) sense.

**Marketing the Finished Product.**

A plan for marketing the rehabbed unit in a timely fashion is a critical element of your program.

Trainers: Dale Prunoske and Blair Sebastian

*Wednesday, August 12, 2009*

**HOME Program Basics as they relate to the preservation of capital projects.** This session will focus on the eligibility of project types, rent structure, proposed capital costs and compliance period.

**Stretching Your HOME Dollars.**

This session will focus on using HOME funds for maximum impact. This will include combining other funding sources, such as Weatherization, into an overall preservation strategy. A case study will be included.

**Preservation of Existing Tax Credit Projects and Other Affordable Projects** Many of the early tax credit projects are coming to the end of their compliance period. What are your options for dealing with this? How do you preserve the project as low income housing? How do you deal with needed capital improvements? A case study will be

included.

**Using Your Preservation Plan to Improve Your Asset Management Position.** Preservation is an opportunity to make your project more marketable, easier to maintain, lower cost to operate and to recapitalize your reserves. An architect will speak to the long-term durability and energy efficiency issues of a preservation project. He will discuss a number of new materials, techniques and green strategies that can be incorporated into a well thought out renovation. Also an experienced property manager will speak to the renovations’ potential financial impact on the project’s operation. They will address several issues including the reduction of various operating expenses as a product of the renovations and the possible financial benefits related to the refinancing.

Trainers: Tim Flaherty, Steve Weiss, Blair Sebastian

Registration each day begins at 8:30 AM, with the workshops beginning at 9:30 AM.

For more information on registering for either or both days of the training academy, call Kate Mackey at (518) 458-8696, ext 10.

*30th Annual  
Affordable Housing  
and Community  
Development  
Conference  
Saratoga Hilton Hotel  
November 16-17, 2009  
Mark your calendars  
now!  
Call (518)584-4000 for room  
reservations at our special  
rate.*

## HUD HECM Training Conference Calls

To address concerns about the availability of HECM training, HUD will be hosting conference calls on the new HECM Protocol in the near future. Participation in these conference calls will fulfill counselor training requirements for the HECM Roster and training certificates will be issued by HUD to all participants.

Information about the upcoming calls is below. Participation is on a first-come, first-served basis, with a limitation of 150 available phone lines for each call.

Tuesday, Aug. 11

2 – 4 pm ET

Conference ID # 2190120

Dial-in #: (800) 255-9916

Thursday, Aug. 13

2 – 4 pm ET

Conference ID # 21901377

Dial-in # (800) 255-9916

HUD may hold additional Protocol training sessions, if necessary. Please direct questions or comments to your HUD point of contact or email [Housing.Counseling@hud.gov](mailto:Housing.Counseling@hud.gov).

## HUD Releases Draft FMRs

On July 29th, HUD posted its proposed FY10 Fair Market Rents (FMRs) for public comment on the website [www.huduser.org](http://www.huduser.org). Once the notice is formally published in the Federal Register, likely to be August 4th, advocates will have 30 days with which to comment on the methodology or the rent levels in a specific area. Final FMRs must be released by HUD on or before October 1st.

FMRs are primarily used to determine payment standards and rent levels in the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher program, but they are used in a variety of ways by a number of federal programs. According to the preface to the data, FMRs are meant to reflect “the amount that would be needed to pay the gross rent (shelter rent plus utilities) of privately owned, decent, and safe rental housing of a modest (non-luxury) nature with suitable amenities.” Practically, FMRs are generally set at a level that HUD determines is the 40th percentile rent for standard quality rental in a metropolitan area or rural county. For more information, visit [www.huduser.org/datasets/fmr.html](http://www.huduser.org/datasets/fmr.html).

## Two New Bills Address Homelessness

Two bills were introduced in the Senate the week of July 27th that address homelessness.

On July 28th, Senators Richard Burr and Jack Reed introduced legislation that would provide supportive services in permanent supportive housing for individuals and families experiencing long-term homelessness. Such services would focus on helping people move toward recovery and self-sufficiency. The bill, S 1523, was referred to the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions.

On July 30th, Senator Jack Reed introduced S 1547, the Zero Tolerance for Veterans’ Homelessness Act. The bill would enhance and expand the assistance provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs and HUD to homeless veterans and veterans at risk of homelessness. The bill, which is co-sponsored by Senators Christopher Bond, Tim Johnson, Patty Murray, Richard Durbin and John Kerry, was referred to the Senate Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

## Extension Opportunity For Tax Credits

The Low Income Housing Credit program is designed to facilitate the timely completion of affordable housing projects. Projects which do not meet completion time frames have had their allocation revoked, with no provision for extensions or exceptions, and credits that are not used by the State in a timely fashion are forfeited. The current downturn and contraction in the banking industry and the equity markets has prevented some LIHC projects from securing financing necessary to meet LIHC reservation deadlines.

DHCR, in order to provide developers with additional time to obtain financing, will consider written requests for tax credit reservation deadline extensions to no later than September 15, 2009, for such projects with deadlines occurring from June 1, 2009 through August 15, 2009. For good cause shown, limited extensions will be granted based on the individual needs of the project, but, in general, any extensions granted by DHCR will seek to expedite commencement of project construction at the earliest possible date.

For more information, visit [www.nysdhcr.gov/Programs/LIHC/LIHC\\_Res\\_Deadline\\_Extension.pdf](http://www.nysdhcr.gov/Programs/LIHC/LIHC_Res_Deadline_Extension.pdf).

DHCR has been allocated funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 for the Weatherization Assistance Program. Approximately \$50 million will be made available to fund temporary subgrantees for the purpose of targeting multi-family portfolios that have significant need for energy assistance. Deadline is September 3rd. Visit [www.nysdhcr.gov/Funding/RFPs/WAPRFP0709.pdf](http://www.nysdhcr.gov/Funding/RFPs/WAPRFP0709.pdf).

## Housing Advocates Seek to Influence Senate Climate Bill

As the Senate drafts climate legislation for consideration in September, a group of organizations that work on the preservation of federally assisted rental housing sent a letter to key legislators asking that the Senate bill target \$750 million a year in revenues from the climate bill toward energy retrofits in public and assisted housing. Such a set-aside would expand a similar set-aside in the House-passed climate bill, HR 2454, the American Clean Energy and Security Act of 2009 (ACES).

The July 27th letter was coordinated by the Preservation Working Group, which is co-convened by NLIHC and the National Housing Trust, and was sent to Committee on Environment and Public Works Chair Barbara Boxer and Ranking Member James Inhofe. The letter was signed by 41 organizations, including the National Low Income Housing Coalition and eight NLIHC state partners.

At the core of the climate proposals in Congress is a cap and trade mechanism that sets a limit (cap) on pollutions, and allows polluters to purchase and trade permits (allowances) to pollute. By allocating the proceeds from the sale of allowances, Congress can provide additional funding for specific programs.

The NLIHC, along with partner organizations, successfully advocated for the inclusion in ACES of a provision to make 10% of funds that states would receive under the bill's Retrofit for Energy and Environmental Performance (REEP) program available to public and assisted housing on a preferential basis. This allocation would be rough-

ly 0.05% of total allowances granted in the bill, and is estimated it will yield \$65 million annually. A \$750 million set-aside would increase the allocation to approximately 1% of all allowances.

NLIHC has long supported energy improvements targeted specifically at public and assisted stock as meeting four important climate and housing goals:

- First, most public and assisted buildings are more than 25 years old and, through depreciation and design, are highly energy inefficient. As a result, this stock represents some of the most accessible for rapid reductions in greenhouse gases.
- Second, the households in these developments are the least able to make their own investments in energy efficiency, and are unable to benefit from many of the programs that provide incentives for private efficiency investments.
- Third, the investment in this stock would improve and perhaps serve to preserve buildings that might otherwise be lost to the affordable housing stock.
- Finally, and perhaps most importantly in the current political climate, these investments should lead to direct long-run savings for taxpayers by cutting the operating costs and utility bills for these buildings and tenants that the federal government is often responsible for paying at least in part.

The Center for Budget and Policy Priorities estimates this higher set aside would provide meaningful energy efficiency improvements in more than half the subsidized housing stock over 10 years.

## Tax Credit Signed

*Continued from Page 1*

vestment to struggling municipalities, particularly those Upstate. The enhancements will provide the following tax incentives for qualified historic properties:

Gradually increase over five years the cap on the commercial credit value from \$100,000 to \$5 million and the residential credit value from \$25,000 to \$50,000;

Target the credit in "distressed" areas -- those located within a Census tract identified at or below one hundred percent of the median family income;

Increase the share of qualified rehabilitation costs that commercial property owners can claim for the credit from 6 percent to 20 percent; and

Offer the Preservation Tax Credit as a rebate for lower income homeowners to provide them with a stronger financial incentive with relatively smaller tax liability.

The program will apply to taxable years beginning January 1, 2010, and will sunset in five years on December 31, 2014.

## Advocates Guides Available

NLIHC's *2009 Advocates' Guide to Housing & Community Development Policy*, which provides comprehensive and up-to-date descriptions of more than 60 federal housing and housing-related programs, from the Community Development Block Grant program to Housing Choice Vouchers to the Weatherization Assistance Program, is now available for bulk purchases. While supplies last, NLIHC is offering special bulk rates to partners: \$15 for the first 10 copies purchased and \$10 for each additional copy. Contact Khara Norris at 202-662-1530 x242 for info.

## Website Serves The Disability Community

The US Department of Labor recently launched *Disability.gov*, the federal government's Web site for people with disabilities, their family members, veterans, caregivers, employers and others. The new site, previously called *DisabilityInfo.gov*, features comprehensive information about disability-related programs and services, as well as social media tools to better serve the more than 50 million Americans with disabilities.

*Disability.gov*'s social media tools encourage interaction and feedback from visitors, and offer new ways to organize, share and receive information. Visitors can sign up for personalized news and updates, par-

ticipate in online discussions and suggest resources for the site. New features include a Twitter feed, RSS feeds, a blog and social bookmarking. Additional social media tools will be added to the site in the months ahead.

The new site includes user-friendly ways to get answers to important questions on finding employment, job accommodations and other topics. The site is organized into ten subject areas: benefits, civil rights, community life, education, emergency preparedness, employment, health, housing, technology and transportation. By selecting a category, visitors are directed to useful

information on federal and state government programs and services, news and events, grants and funding opportunities and more. *Disability.gov*, an effort led by the Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy, contains thousands of links to reliable, trusted information from numerous federal agency partners, as well as educational institutions, non-profit organizations and state and local governments. It is an important resource not only for Americans with disabilities, but also for the parents of children with disabilities, employers, workforce and human resource professionals, veterans, military families, caregivers and many others.

*Visit our website at [www.ruralhousing.org](http://www.ruralhousing.org)*



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