

Housing Action NH

Improving state and federal policy so everyone in New Hampshire has a place to call home.

www.housingactionnh.org

News and Legislative Update

Several housing policy priorities may jump to the front burner during the *lame duck* Congress, including the National Disaster Tax Relief Act, the FY '15 HUD budget and tax extenders legislation.

Also, with an eye toward the next NH legislative session, Housing Action NH looks forward to working with newly elected and returning members on policy supports for affordable housing in New Hampshire.

FEDERAL UPDATE

LIHEAP. An additional pool of \$23 million in Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) funding was released to New Hampshire last month thanks to efforts of NH Senators Jeanne Shaheen and Kelly Ayotte. Shaheen and Ayotte joined a bipartisan group of Senators earlier this year to urge funding for this program of \$4.7 billion in 2015, significantly more than the Administration's \$2.8 billion request, which is a \$600 million decrease from FY '14 funding.

2015 Budget. Although pundits anticipated the lame duck Congress would pass another Continuing Resolution (CR) when the current CR funding the government at FY '14 levels expires Dec. 11, there are now preparations underway to pass a full FY '15 Omnibus bill. National housing advocates have also urged Congress to pass a full T-HUD appropriations bill to fund the remainder of fiscal year 2015, which began Oct. 1.

Click <http://housingactionnh.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/FY15-budget-chart-6-9-14-update.pdf> for a chart of funding levels proposed by program for FY '15 T-HUD bills passed out of Committee.

National Disaster Tax Relief Act of 2014. The Senate Finance Committee's Subcommittee on Taxation and IRS oversight will hold a hearing on S. 2634 Nov. 18. The bill includes much needed tax relief to regions affected by natural disasters and includes Hurricane Irene. Housing Action NH will submit testimony for the upcoming hearing in support of the bill's proposed allocation of \$1.5 million in Housing Tax Credits for Carroll and Grafton counties. If you have an Irene story you would like to

share, please contact Housing Action NH's director, Elissa Margolin, at elissa@housingactionnh.org.

Tax Extenders Bill. With the tax extenders bill (providing extensions of expiring tax provisions) in play and tax reform likely on the table for the 114th Congress, affordable housing advocates are supporting an extension of the minimum 9 percent Housing Tax Credit rate for new construction and rehabilitation, and a new minimum 4 percent rate for the acquisition of affordable housing. The Low Income Housing Tax Credit program is the primary source for affordable housing development in New Hampshire.

Disparate Impact Court Challenges. The US Supreme Court recently agreed to review a fair housing case, focusing on the issue of disparate impact, the legal theory that practices and patterns can have adverse impact on members of a protected class without intention. This has fair housing advocates concerned with losing ground. The case, Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA) v. Inclusive Communities Project, focuses on whether TDHCA violated the Fair Housing Act by disproportionately awarding Housing Credits to projects in areas with high minority concentrations. In a separate case earlier this month, a DC District Judge struck down HUD's disparate impact rule, finding in favor of the two insurance industry groups who sued HUD.

STATE UPDATE

Emergency Shelters Budget. The NH Department of Health & Human Services has requested a slight increase for Emergency Shelters in their 2016-17 biennial budget

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to support Coordinated Assessments as required by the HEARTH Act. Coordinated Assessments have successfully launched in some areas of the state, including the

Seacoast and Keene regions, providing evidence that the approach decreases the number of homeless via diversion strategies and results in savings to focus on more complex and chronic cases. Housing Action NH will coordinate a task force on this budget item. Advocates with interest may contact Laurel at Laurel@housingactionnh.org.

New Legislature. The NH State Senate majority met in caucus and agreed to support Chuck Morse for another term as Senate President. A formal vote takes place Dec. 3. The NH House also meets that day to elect its Speaker, who will, in turn, appoint committee chairs and assign House members to committees. House members have until Dec. 5 to file Legislative Service Requests, while Senators have not set themselves a deadline for filing new bills. Legislative Service Requests can be found at http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/lsr_search/. The new legislative session gets underway Jan. 7.

Housing Study Commission. The Commission on Housing Policy and Regulation established by SB185 (2013) has submitted its final report. The Committee investigated regulatory barriers to the development of affordable housing, including safety code enforcement and multi-level demands on planning, environmental and engineering requirements. The Committee also collected data on the alarming lack of workforce housing throughout the state. Their recommendations include a state commitment to ongoing housing needs assessments and supporting the Affordable Housing Fund. The full report is available at <http://housingactionnh.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/SB185FinalReportw.attachments2014.11.1.pdf>

Foreclosure Study Commission. The Commission to Study NH Mortgage Foreclosure Law, New Federal Regulations and Fair Foreclosure Practices established by passage of SB306 (2014) has filed its final report. The report is available <http://housingactionnh.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/SB306ForeclosureCommFinal-Report2014.11.1.pdf>. Of note, the Commission, in a 5-4

vote, did not recommend taking up Protection of Tenants at Foreclosure (PTFA) as a legislative step, but rather as a study. The Federal PTFA, which gives tenants reasonable notice and protections from eviction when their landlord's property is foreclosed upon, expires at the end of 2014.

Child and Family Subcommittee of the Health & Human Services Oversight Committee. This subcommittee, formed in June 2013, examined services and needs of NH children, including housing. Among its findings are recommendations to dedicate funding and incentives toward development of affordable housing, increase funding to the state's Emergency Shelters program and protect NH's Workforce Housing Law. The full report is available at <http://housingactionnh.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/DHHSOversightChildrenFamilyServicesSubcommReport2014.11.10.pdf>

2014 ELECTIONS RESULTS

After the 113th Congress resolves its lame duck session, the 114th Congress will convene on Jan. 3, 2015. Republicans will hold the majority of the US Senate and the US House of Representatives. NH's Congressional delegation will include Senator Shaheen (D-NH), Senator Ayotte (R-NH), Representative Guinta (R-NH 1) and Representative Kuster (D-NH2).

NH's elections also brought about changes to the NH Executive Council (3R-2D), State Senate (14R-10D) and State House (final numbers are TBD; several recounts are underway).

Wondering who won in your district or statewide? See [NHPR](#) or [WMUR](#) for lists by district.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Nov. 14 – Housing Matters Workgroup. 10 am, Concord. This monthly meeting is open to all Housing Action NH members. Contact Laurel for more information Laurel@housingactionnh.org.

Nov. 18-19 – Seacoast Summit on Homelessness & Housing. Two-day session provides an opportunity for a diverse group of stakeholders to identify and collaborate on strategies to solve community problems related to homelessness. Sponsored by the Greater Seacoast Coalition on Homelessness. For more information on the Summit, see <http://housingactionnh.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/SUMMIT-flyer.pdf>.

Dec. 5 – “Housing & Hiring: What Employers Need to Know About Workforce Housing” Hosted by the Business & Industry Association of NH. 11:30 am – 1:30 pm, Manchester. Panelists will look at housing, and its impact on hiring, retention and productivity. **Housing Action NH has partnered with the BIA on this event and our members may register at the discounted rate by clicking <http://www.biaofnh.com/events/Housing-and-Hiring-What-Employers-Need-to-Know-About-Workforce-Housing-211/details> .**

Dec. 12 – New England Housing Network Annual Meeting Housing Action NH is a partner in the [New England Housing Network](#), a group created almost 20 years ago by leading housing advocates and providers from all six New England states to preserve and develop affordable housing. Event highlights include keynote by Congressman Barney Frank (retired), national speakers, plenaries and workshops on The 100,000 Homes Campaign, affordable housing messaging, Federal budget and legislative issues, combating homelessness, implementing sustainable operations and the intersection of health and housing. Details and registration at <http://bit.ly/10VmWEZ>.

For the most up-to-date listing of events, please see the Updates section of our website, <http://housingactionnh.org/category/events-and-conferences/>.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS & SPONSORS

Our membership is growing! Please join Housing Action NH in welcoming our newest sponsoring members **Chinburg Properties, Lake Sunapee Bank and Pentucket Bank**.

Finally, thanks to all members and sponsors who have renewed for 2014 for your continued partnership!

Not Yet a Member? If your organization is not on the list that follows, please consider joining us. Our unique coalition focuses on NH issues, and we are stronger together! Simply download, complete and return our one-page member form at <http://housingactionnh.org/take-action/become-a-member/>. Contact our membership coordinator at Laurel@housingactionnh.org for more information on becoming a member.

Get Social With Housing Action NH. Please take a moment now to follow us @HousingActionNH on Twitter and like our Facebook page “[Housing Action NH](#).” We update these channels frequently and are able to share more timely information there.

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ABOUT HOUSING ACTION NH

Housing Action NH was created to build and coordinate alliances in effective advocacy for strong federal and state investment in the preservation of existing affordable housing, the development of new affordable housing, rental subsidies for low income families and strong policies and funding to serve the homeless and end homelessness. For more information about our work, see www.housingactionnh.org.

HOUSING ACTION NH MEMBERS: AHEAD, Alliance Asset Management, Inc., Anagnost Companies, American Friends Service Committee, Avesta Housing Development Corp., Belknap-Merrimack Community Action Program, CATCH Neighborhood Housing, Center for Life Management, Centrix Bank, Chinburg Properties, Citizens Housing and Planning Association, Cross Roads House, Dakota Partners, Inc., Attorney John Deachman, Dover Housing Authority, Eastern Lakes Region Housing, Every Child Matters in New Hampshire, Families in Transition, Family Connections Resource Center, Fellowship Housing Opportunities, Inc., The Friends Program, Great Bridge Properties, Greater Nashua Mental Health Center, Greater Seacoast Coalition on Homelessness, Granite State Independent Living, Granite State Organizing Project, Home Builders and Remodelers Association of NH, Homeless Center for Strafford County, Housing Initiatives of New England Corporation, Harbor Homes, Inc., The Housing Partnership, Isaiah 58 New Hampshire, Keene Housing, Laconia Area Community Land Trust, Laconia Housing Authority, Lake Sunapee Bank, League of Women Voters New Hampshire, Lutheran Social Services, Manchester Housing Authority, Marguerite's Place, Inc., Maria Sillari, Consultant, My Friend's Place, Nashua Soup Kitchen and Shelter, National Housing Conference + Center for Housing Policy, NeighborWorks Southern New Hampshire, Nesseralla & Company, LLC, NH Community Development Finance Authority, NH Community Loan Fund, NH Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence, NH Coalition to End Homelessness, NH Council of Churches, New Hampshire Housing, NH Legal Assistance, Northern New England Housing Investment Fund, Otis/Atwell, Pentucket Bank, Portsmouth Housing Authority, Seacoast Family Promise, Sheehan Phinney Bass + Green PA, Society of St. Vincent de Paul Exeter, Southern NH Services, Inc., Southwestern Community Services, Inc., Stewart Property Management, TD Bank, N.A., The Front Door Agency, The Way Home, Twin Pines Housing Trust, United Valley Interfaith Project, Workforce Housing Coalition of the Greater Seacoast

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Housing Action NH, PO Box 162, Concord, NH 03302

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!