

## HUD Introduces Draft Bill to Cut Housing Benefits

On April 25, HUD released draft legislation "[Making Affordable Housing Work Act of 2018](#)". This proposal ([summarized here](#)) seeks to significantly raise rents and limit assistance for low-income families, including seniors and people with disabilities who rely on HUD programs. A draft of [a similar bill](#) was published by Rep. Dennis Ross (R-FL) during the prior week. NHLP joined the National Low Income Housing Coalition (NLIHC)



and other partners in issuing a [press release](#) opposing these proposals. As stated by NHLP's Executive Director Shamus Roller, "These proposals reject the realities of who relies upon HUD programs and basic research on improving the lives of low-income residents. What pretends to be a hand up is really a foot in the back."

The Center for Budget and Policy Priorities estimates that rents would be raised by an average of 44% on more than 4 million low-income households with rental assistance. CBPP also has new data and analysis on the [state-by-state impact](#) of this proposal. NLIHC is [collecting organizational sign-on's](#) to a national letter urging Congress to reject these proposals.

On April 27, NHLP hosted a call with dozens of concerned tenant advocates to discuss these proposals and strategize next steps. For more information, please contact Jessie Cassella at [jcassella@nhlp.org](mailto:jcassella@nhlp.org).

## Trump Administration's Proposed Rule Punishes Immigrant Families with Housing Assistance



The Washington Post recently [leaked a draft proposed rule](#) by the Trump Administration that would directly impact immigrants and their families who are applying for or receiving almost any federal, state, or local assistance around housing or homelessness. The proposed rule by the Department of Homeland Security seeks to change the way in which the agency determines whether an immigrant is likely to become a "public charge". This [fact sheet](#) by NHLP and the National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty highlights what advocates should know about the proposed rule and how they can be involved. Please stay tuned for a webinar on **Thursday, May 17 at 12-1pm PT/2-3pm CT/3-4pm ET**.

## Princeton's Eviction Lab

Under the leadership of Professor Matthew Desmond, the Eviction Lab at Princeton has launched their new

website and made public a host of eviction data from across the country. The site includes rankings, maps and the most comprehensive database of evictions ever compiled. [www.evictionlab.org](http://www.evictionlab.org)



## Staff Spotlight: Eric Dunn



[Eric Dunn](#) joins NHLP as the Director of Litigation. Eric is a national expert on tenants' rights and consumer law issues. He is known for high-impact advocacy on matters affecting subsidized housing tenants and families struggling to access housing because of criminal and eviction records. Prior to NHLP, Eric was an attorney with the Virginia Poverty Law Center, the Northwest Justice Project in Seattle, and the Legal Aid & Defender Association of Detroit. Eric will work out of NHLP's new office in Richmond, Virginia. He can be reached at [edunn@nhlp.org](mailto:edunn@nhlp.org) and 415-432-5702.

## Emerging Issues



On April 12, NHLP kicked off its [Smoke-free Public Housing Initiative](#) by bringing together stakeholders from a range of sectors to

discuss **effective and equitable implementation of HUD's smoke-free requirements** for local housing authorities in public housing. NHLP and our smoke-free partners will publish a best practices manual on effective and equitable smoke-free policies in public housing.

On March 22, HUD published guidance on the demolition



and disposition of public housing in [Notice PIH 2018-04](#). The new guidance replaces a former notice, which was a product of years of advocacy by NHLP, the National Low Income Housing Coalition, and the Housing Justice Network. The [new demo-dispo guidance](#) **undermines** rules that HUD previously identified as necessary to preserve public housing.

## Of Note

NHLP's Jessie Cassella expressed concern to several media outlets about [HUD's lack of monitoring Rental](#)



[Assistance Demonstration \(RAD\) conversions in many communities](#) and, specifically, the agency's [failure to monitor tenants' rights](#) guaranteed by the program.

HUD has announced an **opportunity to provide funding for local housing authorities to provide housing vouchers for individuals with disabilities (Section 811)**. The agency will award up to \$100 million. [Applications](#) are due June 18, 2018.



The Community Justice Project in PA recently reached a [conciliation](#)

[agreement](#) with the owners of Center City Apartments, a project-based Section 8-subsidized housing provider in Hazleton, PA. Among other obligations, the agreement requires Center City to develop a Language Access Plan, provide



NYC [filed a class action lawsuit against the NYC Housing Authority](#) (NYCHA) for failing to provide basic heating services

to hundreds of thousands of public housing tenants. This case comes on the heels of Governor Cuomo declaring a state of emergency at NYCHA and [another lawsuit filed by tenant leaders](#) requesting that the court appoint an independent monitor to oversee NYCHA because of its failure to provide heat and hot water, to keep residents safe from lead, and to involve tenants in policymaking.



San Francisco City Attorney Dennis Herrera has [sued U.S. Attorney General Jefferson Sessions](#) over Sessions' decision to

rescind civil rights guidance documents. The complaint, filed in federal court in California, seeks to have the court void the repeal and to reinstate six guidance documents, including one with directions for local governments not to pass laws that discriminate against individuals with disabilities.

Five Democratic U.S. Representatives and Senators have sponsored the **Rural Housing Preservation Act** ([S. 2574](#) and [H.R. 5352](#)). NHLP helped draft the legislation, which seeks to ensure that rural rental assistance can continue to be provided at properties financed by USDA mortgages that end, and further to allow rural vouchers to be provided to properties with maturing mortgages.

U.S. Rep. Maxine Waters (D-CA) introduced **The FHA Foreclosure Prevention Act** ([HR 5555](#)), to

strengthen oversight of loan servicers' loss mitigation practices when borrowers with FHA loans are facing foreclosure. The measure is supported by NHLP, which provided technical



critical language assistance, and appoint a language access coordinator to oversee compliance and receive complaints.

On April 23, in [Colony Cove Properties v. City of Carson](#), the Ninth Circuit Court of



Appeals held that the City's imposition of rental control on Colony Cove mobile home park did not constitute a taking. NHLP had joined in an amicus brief filed on behalf of the City.

In [City and County of San Francisco v. Post](#), a California appeals court affirmed that California's Fair Employment & Housing Act did not preempt local ordinances banning discrimination against Section 8 voucher holders.



The National Community Reinvestment Coalition released [a study](#) showing how redlining policies against racial and ethnic

minorities since the 1930's have lasting impacts on housing patterns, the economic health of neighborhoods, and who accumulates wealth.

The Council of Large Public Housing Authorities's project *Housing Is* has released a multimedia publication, [Elements of a Successful Partnerships](#), highlighting how housing authorities in the Pacific-Northwest created a regional collaboration to further housing-education efforts.

In April, NHLP's Lisa Sitkin testified before the California Senate Judiciary and Senate Banking and Financial Institutions Committees in support of [SB 818](#), a bill co-sponsored by



assistance with the drafting of the bill.



Under HUD Secretary Ben Carson, the agency has [significantly scaled back](#) on its **enforcement**

**obligations under the Fair Housing Act.**

Sources connected to HUD indicate that the Secretary for HUD's Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity, has said that ["cracking down on assistance animals is a 'priority'"](#), and that HUD may issue new guidance restricting access to emotional support animals..."

NHLP to **restore critical homeowner protections in the State's Homeowner Bill of Rights (HBOR)** that expired in 2017. The bill passed both Committees and heads to the Senate Appropriations Committee, and then the Senate Floor at the end of May.



On April 24, NHLP's Renee Williams testified before the California Assembly Judiciary

Committee in support of [AB 2413](#), a bill co-sponsored by NHLP that would **expand housing protections for tenants seeking police and emergency assistance**. The bill passed the Judiciary Committee and heads to the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

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