



Funders Together

TO END HOMELESSNESS



Policy Alert

What's Happening: Housing Supply Plan Outlines Legislative and Policy Action Over 5 Years

Yesterday, the Biden-Harris Administration announced the Housing Supply Action Plan to address housing affordability, quality, and supply. The White House called on Congress once again to pass the housing justice priorities included in the Biden administration proposals. An outline of those investments was included in our [April 28 Policy Update](#).

The White House said the plan aligns federal policy action with the investments called for in the Build Back Better Act, the reconciliation bill passed by the House in November. "This plan will ease costs for families across the country and give communities the tools they need to make more affordable housing available to residents," Secretary Fudge said, announcing the plan in Columbus, Ohio.

The White House statement on [New Actions to Ease the Burden of Housing Costs](#) connects several Administration initiatives that aim to increase housing supply and affordability; lays out the policy framework for the [President's FY2023 Budget Proposal](#); and emphasizes the need for Congressional action to curb inflation, calling on Congress to pass a reconciliation bill that includes targeted housing investments.

Federal actions include:

- Incentivizing and rewarding communities for local zoning reform
- Increasing access to manufactured housing, accessory dwelling units (ADUs), and small scale developments
- Improving coordination across federal financing and funding sources
- Developing new federal financing mechanisms to build and preserve affordable housing

Both housing supply and housing affordability are driven, not only by the high cost of housing construction in the United States and by the challenges of our complex affordable housing finance structure, but also – and possibly most fiercely – by community- and neighborhood-led efforts to prevent racial and class integration, curbing communities' growth, potential, and inclusivity. Not In My Backyard (NIMBY) activists and others have succeeded in getting restrictive zoning laws passed in many cities to inhibit and prohibit multifamily housing.

How Philanthropy Can Take Action

The Administration's actions to ease the burden of housing costs lay out comprehensive actions the federal government can and will take, but they also recognize they cannot do it alone and need the partnership of Congress, states, communities, service providers, and private sector partners. These actions also require cross-sector collaboration, particularly in bringing together transportation and housing partners to maximize federal funding opportunities.

Members of philanthropy may be uniquely situated to support these partnerships across government agencies at the state and local levels, while creating space for people with lived expertise of housing instability to guide community priorities.

Funders Together and our partners in the [National Coalition for Housing Justice](#) are renewing our calls to Congress to pass the a reconciliation bill to bolster federal efforts to ease housing costs. If you are a public foundation or United Way and can engage in direct lobbying, call on members of Congress to weigh in directly with committee members and leadership [to support additional investments in housing](#).

If you are a private foundation or unable to partake in direct lobbying activities, contact your federal policymakers to educate and inform them about what you are seeing in your community and hearing from grantee partners around affordable housing and housing instability. You can also encourage your trustees to advocate for these levels of federal investments in housing and homelessness services. Here's an [overview of priorities necessary to advancing housing justice](#).

Remember: Public and private foundations may educate legislators about a broad range of issues without referencing or providing views on specific legislation.

Focusing on the Long-Term Vision: The Need for Pay Equity on the Path to Housing Justice

In Los Angeles, 91% of the lowest compensated employees at the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) are people of color. Despite public commitments to racial equity, community leaders [failed to support efforts to increase pay](#) for those within the agency.

Last week, the National Coalition for Housing Justice released a [statement on equitable pay](#), recognizing that pay inequity is not only counter to our stated values, but it is also a systemic and critical tool that perpetuates racial capitalism in America:

“Underpaying frontline workers is a clear and concrete example of racial injustice and shows the disconnect we have as a field between publicly stating to uphold the values of racial equity and putting those values into practice. Economic justice is foundational to securing and keeping housing, and one tangible way to contribute to advancing racial justice is providing a livable wage, especially in direct service professions where a large majority of the employees are Black, Indigenous, and other people of color. We can't say we are committed to ending homelessness and housing instability while contributing to it by not paying people a housing wage for their specialized skills and knowledge to do this work.”

As Heidi Marston, former Executive Director of LAHSA, said in her statement: “Decisions to obstruct basic equity principles like fair pay illuminate the fundamental gap between stated values and demonstrable action.”

As funders and accountability partners, members of the philanthropic community have a pivotal role to play in advancing pay equity and [dismantling racial capitalism](#). These efforts should be developed in partnership and solidarity with frontline workers of color, but our community must be mindful of the ways our perspectives and roles can perpetuate paternalism and white supremacy in these settings.

When we recognize that our funds are used to perpetuate racism, structured to restrain the well-being and thriving of the individuals most critical to this work, we must recalibrate to bring our actions into alignment with our values.

[Tell us](#): Is your organization addressing pay inequity? How are your values driving decision-making in this arena?

Policy Resource Round-Up

- **Center on Budget and Policy Priorities:** [Three Reasons Why Providing Cash to Families With Children Is a Sound Policy Investment](#)
- **National Alliance to End Homelessness:** [Taking Stock: System Improvements and the 2022 NOFO Competition - National Alliance to End Homelessness](#)
- **National Low Income Housing Coalition:** [Targeted Housing Investments Are Vital to Addressing Inflation](#)
- **National Racial Equity Working Group:** [Resource Library for Research and Data on Homelessness and Racial Equity](#)
- **New Bazaar Podcast:** [How to Fix the Housing Market](#)
- **The White House:** [New Actions to Ease Burden of Housing Costs](#)
- **United States Interagency Council:** [Biden Announces New Actions, and Urges Congress to Make Housing More Affordable](#)

As always, we are here to answer your questions or provide insights on public policy developments and opportunities. Please reach out to me or [Amanda](#) at any time.

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