



Funders Together

TO END HOMELESSNESS



Policy Alert

What's Happening: Absent Congressional Leadership | Government Shutdown Deadline Looms Again

Nine Republican members of Congress are [running for Speaker of the House of Representatives](#) this week after the position has been vacant for an unprecedented 18 days. Several strategies to resume governance have been overruled by some Republicans as the House has repeatedly failed to elect a leader. The first round of voting for this group of candidates is expected Tuesday.

Congress has less than four weeks to pass non-defense spending packages or a renewed continuing resolution to avoid a shutdown on Nov. 18. Once the House resumes usual operations, Congress is expected to expedite military spending, however, there are few signs of progress toward other bipartisan spending bills.

Meanwhile, as we outline below, some members of Congress have been crafting harmful legislation targeted to historically marginalized communities and housing supports that are vital to them.

How Philanthropy Can Take Action

Philanthropy can support state and local advocates in pushing back against harmful legislation and demanding ample domestic spending by building power and community with other cross-sector advocates. Housing justice advocates can vocalize direct opposition to the proposed actions outlined below with members of the relevant [House](#) and [Senate](#) appropriations committees.

The National Low Income Housing Coalition [outlined the problematic and harmful amendments to the FY24 spending bill](#):

- Eliminating funding for the Housing for Persons with AIDs (HOPWA) program
- Prohibiting HUD from implementing or enforcing its Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing rule
- Prevent HUD from advancing racial equity or diversity, including amendments
- Cutting funding to the HUD Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity
- Weakening HUD's Equal Access rule and allowing shelters to discriminate against transgender individuals experiencing homelessness

- Preventing HUD from providing financial assistance to certain able-bodied individuals
- Cutting funding in half for Community Development Block Grants
- Forcing mixed-status immigrant households to separate or face eviction from HUD housing
- Reducing HUD funding by \$4.95 billion or to FY19 levels
- Cutting funding for fair housing activities and rental assistance
- Imposing rigid work requirements and drug testing
- Undermine HUD's ability to use evidence-based approaches to address homelessness

If you can engage in direct lobbying as a public foundation or United Way, we urge you to call on Members of the House of Representatives to end the leadership crisis and pass a federal budget that fully funds housing programs and homelessness services ahead of the Nov. 17 deadline - free of racist policy changes and funding limitations. Advocates can contact their members of Congress to address these issues [using NLIHC's template letter](#).

If you are a private foundation or unable to partake in direct lobbying activities, contact local policymakers to educate and inform them about what communities of color are facing in your area and how funding cuts, a government shutdown, and/or changes in the policies and spending outlined above will impact your community. You can also encourage your trustees to utilize their voice to educate both the public and government partners about the detrimental impacts of a government shutdown and urge them to do their job.

Remember: Public and private foundations may educate legislators about a broad range of issues without referencing or providing views on specific legislation. Public and private foundations can also provide capacity for grantee partners to contact their Representatives and Senators on behalf of their community.

Focusing on the Long-Term Vision: Preparing for the 2024 Elections and Beyond

As many communities reel from personal losses and collective grief of recent weeks, months, and years, we need safety and repair. While recent elections have further divided communities, our role as leaders and community partners is to uplift what's possible and what's working by resourcing and championing efforts by our partners on the ground. Likewise, it is important for philanthropy to support the well-being of organizers and service providers by funding both the fight and the opportunity for rest and recovery.

Congressional inaction and the increasing rate and gravity of threats to our democracy creates the conditions for apathy among some voters. Our communities – especially Black, Brown, and other historically marginalized communities that have been targeted, harassed, violated, and harmed in this country– cannot afford to see voters opt out or make misinformed decisions.

As Funders Together grapples with the critical intersection of housing justice and democracy, we want to understand where and how our members are also thinking about this. [Tell us:](#)

- How did your staff and partners feel after recent elections? How did you prepare? What did you hope to do differently?
- How are you planning to support housing justice initiatives locally, regionally, or in your state in the next election cycle?
- What policy priorities do you, your grantees, and your board have for next year's elections?
- How can Funders Together help you in advancing housing justice leading into the next election year and beyond?

Our partners at the National Low-Income Housing Coalitions' Our Homes, Our Votes campaign is hosting a [webinar](#) on ballot measures as a pathway to housing justice. The webinar will cover best practices in ballot measure advocacy and preview some of the campaigns that are already underway for the 2024 election cycle.

Policy Resource Round-Up

- **Center on Budget and Policy Priorities:**
 - [Partisan House Appropriations Bills Underfund Non-Defense Priorities and Are a Sharp Break From the Bipartisan Debt Ceiling Agreement](#)
 - [Policy Basics: Introduction to the Federal Budget Process](#)
 - [Record Rise in Poverty Highlights Importance of Child Tax Credit; Health Coverage Marks a High Point Before Pandemic Safeguards Ended](#)
- **National Alliance to End Homelessness:**
 - [Potential Government Shutdown: What You Need to Know](#)
- **National Housing Law Project:**
 - [A Guide to HUD Tenants' Rights During a Government Shutdown](#)
- **National Low Income Housing Coalition:**
 - [Take Action to Stop Harmful Amendments to the FY24 Spending Bill and Protect Housing Investments!](#)
 - [Senate Prepares to Vote on THUD Spending Bill While House Struggles to Elect Speaker – Take Action!](#)
 - [Housing is Built with Ballots: Our Homes, Our Votes](#)

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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