



Funders Together

TO END HOMELESSNESS



Policy Alert

What's Happening: FY24 Federal Spending Bill Deadline Looms as Congress Returns from Recess

With Congress back from recess this week, the [deadline is quickly approaching](#) to pass a federal budget and avoid a partial government shutdown. Funding for the U.S. Dept of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) will expire on March 1 if an agreement for FY24 federal budget has not been reached or a continuing resolution (CR) is not put in place, putting many people at risk of not receiving the services and supports they need. Given that the Senate was back in session today and the House reconvenes on February 28th, another CR may be put into place extending the deadline two weeks.

In February, [appropriation leaders reportedly reached an agreement](#) on topline spending for domestic spending bills, including for Transportation, Housing and Urban Development (THUD). However, it is reported that neither the House or Senate draft THUD spending bills provide enough funding to meet the growing needs of our communities. In addition, current negotiations are centered around [controversial policy riders in the bills](#) that could put passing any final spending bill at risk.

According to our partners at the [National Low Income Housing Coalition](#), as federal agencies impacted by a potential shutdown issue guidance around operations, HUD said, "...nearly all the department's fair housing activities would cease, and most of HUD's roughly 8,600 staff would be furloughed. Programs like emergency housing services for people experiencing homelessness and housing vouchers would continue." And as we have learned from previous shutdowns, there are long-term impacts for these critical programs.

This failure to meet growing resource needs comes at a time when [homelessness and housing insecurity is increasing](#), there is a clear lack of affordable housing, and we are [witnessing threats of further criminalizing people experiencing homelessness](#). By not providing robust funds or scaling up evidence-based solutions, our federal government is ignoring its responsibility to protect and serve our most vulnerable neighbors when support is most important.

How Philanthropy Can Take Action

Advocates are urging partners to continue talking to and educating members of Congress about the importance of robust funding for HUD's affordable housing and homelessness programs. The resources and policies agreed upon for FY24 not only impacts what happens this year, but for years to come as these budget amounts set the baseline for FY25 - which is the focus of Congress once FY24 is passed. Now is the time for philanthropy to step up on behalf of those we serve and educate elected officials on what is needed for thriving communities.

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 the White House and congressional leadership and urge them to support the much needed [critical investments in housing](#), ending homelessness, and community development in FY24. You can also [sign your organization on to the Campaign for Housing and Community Development Funding's \(CHCDF\) letter](#), calling on Congress to provide the highest possible allocation for HUD's and USDA's affordable housing, homelessness, and community development programs in FY24.

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 your grantee partners are experiencing around affordable housing and housing instability and the impact inadequate funding will have on your community. If your trustees have the ability to weigh in directly with leadership, encourage them to be vocal about the need to hold strong on continual robust housing and homelessness federal resources.

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: Building a Framework for Justice-Oriented Advocacy

True impact doesn't happen in the course of one or two-year grantmaking cycles. It takes years of sustained support to see outcomes that move us towards housing justice. Likewise in advocacy and policy engagement, we know housing justice and liberation won't be achieved in the course of a legislative or election cycle. The short-term reform work is important to mitigate harm and address the urgency we see daily. But our vision of housing justice requires sustained, long-term work focused on transformational policies that dismantle current structures and replace with pro-Black and pro-Indigenous solutions rooted in justice and liberation.

To that end, Funders Together to End Homelessness is creating a policy framework that addresses the reforms needed now while actively pursuing policies that will transform systems to set the conditions for true housing and racial justice. This framework aims to help articulate our organization's role in both leading and supporting policy work on a scale of reform to transform by acknowledging the work needed in both areas of the spectrum and how we can best contribute to the overall movement. In the coming months, we are

releasing this policy framework that will codify the work we are already engaged in and also support the aspirational work we outlined in our [strategic framework](#). Our hopes is that it provides clarity to our members, partners, and the field about our positioning on housing justice policies and provides inspiration for philanthropy in its own advocacy engagement.

[Tell us](#): How does your institution lean into the both/and of reform and transformational housing justice policy work? What support do you need to make the case in engaging in transformational advocacy and policy efforts?

Policy Resource Round-Up

- **Funders Together:**
 - [Policy Update: UFY24 Federal Budget Still in Negotiation | U.S. Supreme Court on Johnson v Grants Pass Update](#)
 - [Policy Update: U.S. Supreme Court Takes Up Landmark Case on Homelessness](#)
 - [Rapid Response Funder Call Recording: Understanding the U.S. Supreme Court Johnson v Grants Pass Case](#)
- **Center on Budget and Policy Priorities:**
 - [Added Funding Needed to Prevent Harmful Cuts to Housing Vouchers and Other Rental Assistance Programs in 2024](#)
- **National Alliance to End Homelessness:**
 - [It's Time to Contact Congress — Now](#)
 - [National Alliance to End Homelessness Statement on Landmark Supreme Court Case on Homelessness](#)
- **National Homelessness Law Center:**
 - [SCOTUS takes up Johnson v. Grants Pass, the most significant case about homelessness in 40+ years](#)
- **National Low Income Housing Coalition:**
 - [Agreement on Final FY24 Spending Bill Is Near with Little Time Remaining before 3/1 Deadline](#)

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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