



Funders Together

TO END HOMELESSNESS



Policy Alert

What's Happening: FY24 Federal Budget Update | Biden-Harris Administration's FY25 Federal Budget Proposal

On March 10, President Biden signed a [partial FY24 budget](#) that provides funding for some federal agencies and departments, including the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH). Of note, the bill included:

- \$32.4 billion for Housing Choice Vouchers (HCV), a \$2.1 billion increase from FY23
- \$4.05 billion for Homeless Assistance Grants, up from \$418 million in FY23
- \$1.1 billion for Native American Block Grants, an increase of \$324 million from FY23
- \$16 billion for Project-Based Rental Assistance
- \$505 million for Housing for Persons with AIDs, and
- \$86 million for Fair Housing programs.

However, there were decreases in funding to programs such as the HOME Investment Partnership Program, Section 202 Housing, and Section 811 Housing. What's more, some federal departments critical to housing and homelessness services, such as the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the Department of Education, still are not fully funded. While the [House passed a final spending package](#), it now goes to the Senate and if it isn't approved by midnight tonight (March 22) or the deadline is extended, a partial government shutdown will go into effect.

Related, the Biden-Harris Administration released its [FY25 federal budget proposal](#) which calls for \$72.6 billion for housing and homelessness programs through appropriations. This funding is nearly level with investments in FY24 due to spending caps set in 2023 through an agreement between the Administration and Congress. There is also a request for \$258 billion for affordable housing investments through mandatory spending. You can read a full analysis of the Biden-Harris Administration's [budget proposal here](#).

These federal budget developments come at a time when the U.S. Supreme Court is preparing to hear oral arguments in the [Johnson v. Grants Pass case on April 22](#). The decision on this case will determine whether or not it is legal for cities and states to criminalize people experiencing homelessness for trying to meet basic needs, like sleeping outside when there is no other safe option. We know that the implications of this ruling will disproportionately impact BIPOC, LGBTQ+, new arrivals, and other marginalized people. Local and national partners alike are heavily engaged in mobilizing advocates and

community members in showing broad support for ruling in favor of Johnson. They are undertaking efforts like drafting amicus briefs, [organizing rallies](#), and educating elected officials and other government partners on the importance of best practices over criminalization.

To learn more about the Johnson v. City of Grants Pass case, visit our [U.S. Supreme Court Case on Johnson v Grants Pass Resources page](#).

How Philanthropy Can Take Action

While federal resources are staying level or being cut despite a growing need, the rights of people experiencing homelessness are being threatened. Opponents of housing justice work are supporting drastic cuts in federal funding for affordable housing and homelessness programs while also working to criminalize our unhoused neighbors whose health and safety depend on these very programs.

To protect and serve our neighbors who are experiencing homelessness and housing insecurity, philanthropy must engage in the full spectrum of advocacy opportunities to ensure everyone has a safe and affordable place to live. 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 fund housing, homelessness services, and community development programs at the highest level possible in FY25. You can also [sign your organization on to the Campaign for Housing and Community Development Funding's \(CHCDF\) letter](#).

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.

In addition, all philanthropy has an opportunity and obligation to engage in protecting the rights of our neighbors experiencing homelessness. As local and national partners are working in coalition to implement strategy around the SCOTUS Johnson v Grants Pass case, there are crucial [opportunities for engagement](#) from philanthropy as leaders in your communities, such as:

- Supporting grantee partners in submitting a "friends of the court" brief (or an amicus brief) by April 3 and consider submitting your own.
- Providing the spaciousness to strategize by supporting convening opportunities for partners, people with lived experience, funder peers, and community leaders.
- Resourcing partners and community members to [attend the rally in Washington, D.C. on April 22](#) as the SCOTUS hears oral arguments.

- Considering flexible rapid response resources for housing justice narrative and messaging work that can be utilized before and after a decision.
- Producing op-eds or other educational media placements on the case and the importance of upholding and resourcing best practices.
- Exploring how your institution, board, or trustees can utilize influence and connections in new and creative ways.

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: Engaging in Reform Work While Pushing Transformational Policies for Housing Justice

When our partners at [A Way Home America](#) released the [New Deal to End Youth Homelessness](#), we took note of their Roadmap towards Transformation that clearly articulates efforts that are aimed to reduce harm (reform) and those that are working towards reorienting and building systems towards justice (transform). The roadmap and the source it was adapted from -- Steve Williams' [Demand Everything: Lessons of the Transformative Organizing Model](#) -- contributed to Funders Together thinking more intentionally about how we position ourselves as an organization in our policy work in addition to mobilizing philanthropy in impactful ways around advocacy.

We know that advocacy for robust federal funding is critical work. And, it is work that fits squarely into reform efforts to mitigate harm and address the urgency of now. Housing justice requires a vision of the future we want to see, and clear steps and pathways for that vision to become a reality through transformational efforts. So how can we address the duality of engaging in both reform and transformational work for housing and racial justice?

In the coming months, Funders Together to End Homelessness will release our policy framework that articulates our organization's role in both leading and supporting policy work on a scale of reform to transform by naming the focus of our work across the spectrum. Our hope 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. Over the course of the next few months, we will explore with our members what this framework means for our policy work, how we mobilize philanthropy, and how we collectively contribute to the overall movement for housing and racial justice.

[Tell us:](#) 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: FY24 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](#)
- [U.S. Supreme Court Case on Johnson v Grants Pass Resources page](#)
- **Center on Budget and Policy Priorities:**
 - [Examining Proposals to Address Housing Affordability, Availability, and Other Community Needs](#)
- **Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)**
 - [Secretary Marcia L. Fudge Announces Retirement](#)
- **National Alliance to End Homelessness:**
 - [What Do We Know \(So Far\) About Homelessness Funding in the FY 2024 Budget?](#)
 - [National Alliance to End Homelessness Statement on Landmark Supreme Court Case on Homelessness](#)
 - [Alliance Statement on Outgoing HUD Secretary Marcia L. Fudge](#)
- **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:**
 - [With Final FY24 HUD Spending Bill Secure, Congress Works to Finalize Remaining FY24 Spending Bills by March 22 Deadline while Planning for FY25](#)

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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