



TOOLKIT

Suggestions and Resources to Guide Your Awareness Efforts

More than 70 years ago, this nation committed itself to providing a decent home and suitable living environment for all Americans. To date, this promise has not been fully realized. With renewed public support and enlightened leadership, we are committed to reestablishing this objective as a national priority.

We believe this is a critical national objective that can only be met through an unwavering federal commitment; an ongoing ability on the part of state and local government to fill in the gaps created by the limits of federal assistance; a dedicated, mission-driven not-for-profit community, and a forward-thinking private sector.

Today, 15.6 million households pay more than half of their income for housing; homeless estimates are nearly 750,000. America is the best housed nation on earth, yet for a growing and more economically-diverse number of families, children, seniors and persons with disabilities, affordable housing in quality communities is illusionary. As individuals, organizations, and a nation, we must do more and do better to help those least able to help themselves.

Safe, decent and affordable housing is pivotal in our society—beyond providing basic shelter, it positively impacts the economy and improves the quality of our environment.

Over the years, the public and private sectors have learned much about the cost-effective provision of affordable housing. Together we know what works, what does not work, and why, yet unmet housing needs in our communities persist. Each in our own way, using the resources available to us, we recommit ourselves today to a national goal of meeting the housing needs of all Americans.

Council of Large Public Housing Authorities
Public Housing Authorities Directors Association
American Federation of State, County and
Municipal Employees
Enterprise Community Partners
Habitat for Humanity International
Housing Assistance Council
Local Initiatives Support Corporation
Manufactured Housing Institute
Mortgage Bankers Association
National Affordable Housing Management
Association

National Alliance of Community Economic
Development Associations
National Association of Counties
National Association of Home Builders
National Association of Realtors
National Council of State Housing Agencies
National Housing Conference
National Housing Trust
National League of Cities
National Leased Housing Association
National Low Income Housing Coalition
U.S. Conference of Mayors

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ADVOCACY IDEAS

- Meet with your legislators and/or their staff during their March 15-30 recess visits to your state
- Call your representative's "scheduler" in the local office and ask for time with your representative while they are home. If you are organizing an event or group meeting, have the details handy. (For local office contact information see your [Representatives'](#) and [Senators'](#) websites.)
- Ask whether the DC staff will be coming to the district. If so, invite them over for a tour, or make an effort to sit down with them somewhere in the district.
- Attend town-hall meetings attended by your legislators. Legislators often announce appearances on their websites or report them in the local news.
- Call your legislators' staff in DC: Update staff about your views, state your programmatic concerns, and let them know about needs in your community.
- Send a letter to your representatives in Washington urging them to support your programs.
- Plan an event showcasing a property, program or participants.
- Issue a press release to alert the local media of the impact of budget cuts on your programs.
- Write a letter to the editor of your local paper.
- Consult with City Hall to issue a proclamation in support of affordable housing or declaring an "Affordable Housing Day." Find a sample [here](#).
- Check out the [Housing America 2007 Scrapbook](#) to get inspired by the creative Housing America events put on by your peers.

MEDIA RESOURCES

[NAHRO Public Relations Guide for Local Agencies](#): Provides strategies to assist local agencies with their public relations efforts on the local level.

[Advocacy Guide](#): Information on how to write to or call your Congressperson.

[News Advisory Template](#)

[Press Release Example](#)

The following NAHRO press releases may be useful examples when crafting your own:

[NAHRO, LIISC, Fannie Mae Participate in Mississippi Public Housing Rebuild](#)
[State of the Union Does Not Address Affordable Housing Crisis: Public Housing Program at Risk](#)
[Survey Shows Substantial Negative Effect of Cuts to CDBG on Americans in Need](#)
[#President's Proposed Budget Underfunds Housing and Community Development Programs](#)

[Working with the Media](#) (PowerPoint presentation)

PRESS RELEASE DISTRIBUTION

Associated Press Bureaus

<http://www.ap.org/pages/contact/contact.html>

U.S. Newswire

<http://www.usnewswire.com>

BusinessWire

<http://www.businesswire.com>

GENERAL TIPS AND ADVICE

The Campaign for Affordable Housing

[TCAH's Media Training Guide for Affordable Housing Advocates](#)

<http://www.tcah.org/>

Public Relations Society of America

<http://www.prsa.org>

All About Public Relations

<http://aboutpublicrelations.net/>

DATA RESOURCES

[NAHRO's CD Edge](#)

[Making a Difference: The Importance of Restoring Federal Community Development Funding](#)
[Paying the Price](#)

ANALYSIS OF PRESIDENT'S PROPOSED FY 2009 BUDGET:

[In-Depth Analysis of President's FY 2009 Budget](#)
[NAHRO's FY 2009 Funding Recommendations](#)

FINAL FY 2008 APPROPRIATIONS INFO:

[Details of the FY 2008 Omnibus Funding Bill](#)

CONTACT INFORMATION

State Coordinators

To reach congressional offices, call the US Capitol Switchboard at 202-224-3121 or see [House](#) and [Senate](#) rosters for contact information.

[Housing America 2008 Steering Committee](#)

NAHRO

John Bohm, Dept. Head, Legislative Programs and Media
jbohm@nahro.org or 202-289-3500 ext. 7215

Beth Cooper, Congressional Liaison
bcooper@nahro.org or 202-289-3500 ext. 7210

Mary Barron, Assistant Editor/Public Affairs Coordinator
mbarron@nahro.org or 202-289-3500 ext. 7223

HOUSING AMERICA 2008 PARTICIPANTS, PUBLICATIONS AND CONTACT INFORMATION:

National Housing Conference

[Housing America's Working Families](#)

www.nhc.org

Regional Affiliates: www.nhc.org/housing/about-affiliates

National Low-Income Housing Coalition

[Out of Reach](#)

www.nlihc.org

State Partners: www.nlihc.org/partners/index.cfm

United States Conference of Mayors

[Strong Cities, Strong Families for a Strong America](#)

www.mayors.org

American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees

www.afscme.org

National Directory: www.afscme.org/directory/directory.cfm

Housing Assistance Council

[Rural Housing Information Sheets](#)

www.ruralhousing.org

Local Initiatives Support Corporation

[Against All Odds: The Business of Managing Affordable](#)

[Housing](#)

www.lisc.org

Mortgage Bankers Association

www.mortgagebankers.com

State and Local Associations: www.mortgagebankers.org/AboutMBA/StateandLocalAssociations

National Association of Counties

www.naco.org

State Associations: www.naco.org/Template.cfm?Section=State_Associations&Template=/cfiles/naco/stateassoc.cfm

National Association of Home Builders

www.nahb.org

Local Associations: www.nahb.org/local_association_search_form.aspx

National Association of Realtors

[Housing Affordability Index](#)

www.realtors.org

State and Local Boards: www.realtor.org/leadrshp.nsf/webassoc?OpenView

National Council of State Housing Agencies

www.ncsha.org

Members: www.ncsha.org/section.cfm/4/39/187

MISCELLANEOUS

Order Housing America t-shirts, mugs, buttons and more from cafepress.com.

Download the Housing America logo online. To save the logo for your own use, go to http://www.nahro.org/logo_small.gif, right click on the logo, and choose “save image as.”

For additional graphics, or for a higher resolution version of the Housing America logo, contact Mary Barron at mbarron@nahro.org