JANUARY 2017

2016 is now in the rear-view mirror and the first month of 2017 is already in the history books as well. I hope each PHA and CD organization is off to a good start as we gear up for the changing landscape of affordable housing for 2017 and beyond.

2017 will undoubtedly be a year of adjustment and our goal is to ensure that you are informed of the new and changing landscape of the Department of Housing and Urban Development. We will work diligently to ensure that any ‘late & breaking’ information from National is forwarded to ILNAHRO membership immediately.

I had the opportunity to travel to Chicago to present Regional Director Antonio Riley with a plaque of appreciation from ILNAHRO and its membership as he bid farewell to colleagues and partners of affordable housing within Region V.

Finally, the Joint Conference Committee for ILNAHRO and Indiana NAHRO has met and we are gearing up for our joint conference to be held during the month of August in Springfield, Illinois. Save the date information is forthcoming!!

I look forward to serving you and please contact me if ILNAHRO can be of assistance in any way.

Sincerely,

Jackie L. Newman
ILNAHRO President
On Thursday, January 19th between the hours 11am – 2pm, an “Open House Goodbye Celebration was held in honor of Antonio R. Riley, Regional Administrator – HUD Region V, at the Metcalfe Federal Building in Chicago.

A message from Antonio Riley:

“Today is my last day as a Presidential Appointee serving under President Obama. As I reflect on my time at HUD, I am reminded of the fact that we get only one go-round on God’s wonderful earth. And at the end of the day, it’s about using our time and stations in life to serve others, and to serve the Lord. As an agency, we can take sobering satisfaction that we are on the frontlines of opportunity in the vineyards of men.

To my HUD family, and the communities and lives touched, the words of Senator Ted Kennedy, “And may it be said of us, both in dark passages and in bright days, in the words of Tennyson that my brothers quoted and loved, and that have special meaning for me now: ‘I am part of all that I have met, to [tho] much is taken, much abides, that which we are, we are – one equal temper of heroic hearts, strong in will, to strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.’”

Members of IL NAHRO and other Affordable Housing representatives within Region V joined together in wishing Antonio Riley the best as he embarks on his next opportunity, serving others with the same resolve in which he served and represented Region V.
As Housing Action Illinois (HAI) celebrates its 30th anniversary, a look at the challenges that face affordable housing advocates in 2017. Since its founding 30 years ago, Housing Action Illinois has adhered to the same mission—making housing affordable and fair for Illinois residents. This year is no different, though the challenges have shifted as a new presidential administration takes office and the state enters its second calendar year without a budget.

The group’s nine full-time staffers work behind the scenes with 160 organizations and state and federal government officials to advocate for policies and funding that help Illinoisans find and keep a place to call home—from homeowners/tenants’ rights to homelessness prevention to housing affordability.

Sharon Legenza, who has worked at the nonprofit since 2008, says she has always been interested in social justice and human rights. After serving as the interim executive director of the American Civil Liberties Union affiliate in Anchorage, Alaska, she returned to Chicago to serve as executive director of HAI (Anchorage is not much different than Chicago, though the winter days there are much shorter, she says.)

To celebrate the organization’s 30th anniversary, Housing Action Illinois is hosting a party February 13 at Lagunitas Brewing Co. We sat down with Legenza at the nonprofit’s Loop office to discuss Housing Action Illinois’s recent successes and what’s ahead in 2017.

What are some of Housing Action Illinois’ most significant achievements in 2016? [There’s] legislation called the Community Development Planning Act, which is a state law that helps the state prioritize how we spend affordable housing resources. That law was going to expire and we worked to extend it. Another one that was set to expire and we worked on a coalition with other groups was the Illinois Affordable Housing Tax Credit. A lot of affordable housing developers relied on that for new developments, particularly new rental housing developments, so it was important as a resource to engage the private market.

We’re heading into a new presidency. President-elect Donald Trump has selected Ben Carson as head of the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Are you concerned about some of the statements Carson has made, including his denouncement of the Fair Housing Act? We work a lot with federal partners or national organizations that do a range of housing issues. When you look at a new secretary coming in, I think there’s always an education process. If Ben Carson is confirmed to be secretary of HUD, I think that [Congress] will ask what will be his priorities as secretary. That’s not so clear yet, because he didn’t really campaign on housing reform.

I think that with our national partners, that education process has already hopefully started. Our concern is maintaining fair housing rights, HUD’s overall budget, and funding for housing programs. [We want to educate people on] what programs do and why are they necessary. And then a third priority for us is the National Housing Trust Fund—Illinois just got their allocation this year.

Obviously, HUD is an important player in the affordable housing field and we’ll want to make sure that programs that work and programs that are really effective in ensuring that people have quality affordable housing continue to exist.

On a state level, what are some of the bigger issues affecting housing unaffordability? We need a state budget. If you talk to any social service provider advocate—whether they do direct service or advocacy—the fact that we’ve gone now 18 months without an effective state budget is hugely problematic. And it’s hugely problematic not just for groups that rely on state funding in part to provide homeless prevention or to provide supportive housing. All of these systems are interconnected. Housing is interconnected with education, which is interconnected with job stability. And I just feel like as a state we’ve kind of lost that message somehow.

We’ll be working on as part of the Responsible Budget Coalition to persuade our elected officials on both sides of the aisle, our governor, as well as, the legislature, that really we need to break the impasse. It needs to just happen. As citizens of the state, we deserve better.

What message would Housing Action Illinois like to get across to the state legislature and Governor Rauner when addressing the budget impasse? We do talk to them. [We’re] working with our member organizations who provide direct services throughout the state of Illinois to talk about the importance of their programs on a local level. We sometimes forget the individual nature of the good work, when you start talking about policies and big budgets and big government versus small government versus whatever. Those ideologies and those big-picture policy positions are important to talk about. But in the end what the message we try to send is that from a housing perspective—people need it.

What are the organization’s goals for 2017? We have this campaign to recruit “housing champions” to join our coalition. [Some of them will] work directly in affordable housing and help to push and make sure people have high-quality, affordable housing. [Others will be] people who help us advocate for good housing programs and resources to fund housing programs. It could be anyone who is willing to speak up to elected officials and say, “Hey, this is an important program. Please support it.”

[Another] thing that we’re going to be doing in 2017 is around fair housing. The fact that Chicago remains a very segregated city and that resources are allocated differently based on where you live in the city and the metro region is a problem. We are working with some of our partner fair-housing agencies to increase public education, understanding of fair housing rights, and thinking about how anti-segregation or pro-integration policies can be implemented on a regional basis.

Washington, DC, January 5--In an effort to promote literacy and boost educational outcomes for kids in public housing across the country, the U.S. Departments of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and Education (ED) are joining forces with the Campaign for Grade-Level Reading (GLR), the National Book Foundation (NBF) and the Urban Libraries Council (ULC) to launch the Book-Rich Environment (BRE) Initiative.

BRE aims to transform Public Housing Agencies (PHA) into book-rich environments by putting diverse, high quality books and other literacy tools into the hands of children and families living in HUD-assisted housing. BRE was inspired by recommendations by the President’s My Brother’s Keeper (MBK) Task Force, an initiative to address persistent opportunity gaps faced by America’s youth, and ensure that all young people can reach their full potential.

“This initiative will help ensure that young people, no matter where they live, have the tools they need to reach their full potential,” said HUD Secretary Julián Castro. “HUD is proud to join forces with these public and private partners to boost literacy and educational opportunity for our nation’s children.”

“President Obama’s My Brother’s Keeper initiative seeks to build bridges of opportunity and break down barriers for boys and young men of color and for all students so they can reach their full potential,” said U.S. Secretary of Education John B. King Jr. “The critical work to ensure an equal opportunity for every child requires true collaboration. We are pleased to join with partners across sectors to announce this innovative partnership with libraries, public housing authorities, and community organizations to give more children access to great books, literacy tools and a love of reading. If education is a ladder, then reading is a first step that can help our children reach places that would otherwise be an impossible climb.”

Nearly 4 million low-income children are living in HUD-assisted housing across the country. BRE aims to foster a love of reading and to improve educational outcomes of children living in HUD-assisted housing by distributing free, high quality books to children, promoting literacy activities offered by local libraries and nonprofits, and by strengthening partnerships between PHAs, local public libraries and literacy partners to develop and deliver programming to improve educational outcomes of PHA residents.

“We applaud HUD and ED for launching this collaborative effort to ensure that public housing communities also are book-rich environments. This is a welcome affirmation of commitment to promoting early learning, early literacy and early school success,” said Ralph Smith, managing director of the Campaign for Grade-Level Reading. “The GLR Campaign and its networks of partners will continue to support this Book Rich Environments as it rolls out in communities across the nation.”

“The National Book Foundation’s mission includes enhancing the cultural value of great writing in American and is committed to making sure all people, especially young people who are building their identity as readers, have access to great books,” says National Book Foundation Executive Director Lisa Lucas. “By collaborating with these key national partners, we are able to build the Foundation’s reach and further our mission of making sure that books matter, and that they matter everywhere.”

“This unique partnership is in recognition of our nation’s greatest treasure -- our children,” said ULC CEO Susan Benton. “We are committed to working together to ensure that our kids and their families have books in their home, books and technology at their neighborhood library and all the support needed to become strong readers who will grow and thrive as adults. And that is exactly what we want for our kids and what this partnership aims to achieve.”

The BRE initiative will launch in 35 communities across the country beginning next month. Public housing authorities will partner with local libraries, organized by the Urban Libraries Council, to host community book distribution events throughout 2017. At these events, public housing residents will have access to a diverse set of high quality books secured by the National Book Foundation (NBF). NBF worked with publishers such as Penguin Random House, the world’s largest trade book publisher, which is providing 200,000 books towards the initiative, in furtherance of its mission to nourish a universal passion for reading. Hachette Book Group and Macmillan Publishers have also committed to substantial donations to the initiative. The distribution events will also serve as a platform to strengthen and launch new local partnerships with libraries, public housing authorities and nonprofits, organized by the Campaign for Grade Level Reading, that can help ensure continued access to high quality literacy resources.

The initiative was announced Thursday at a press conference in Washington, D.C.’s Southwest Public Library alongside officials from the D.C. Public Library and the D.C. Public Housing Authority. “The District of Columbia Housing Authority is excited to be part of the Book-Rich Environment Initiative,” said DCHA Executive Director Adrienne Todman. “We know how important it is for children to have access to books and the importance of nurturing lifelong readers. We are thankful for our collaboration with D.C. Public Library, and for the leadership of our federal partners.”

Today’s announcement builds on the foundation established by previous critical efforts between HUD and ED to build bridges between school and home, and improve educational and life outcomes for kids and families in HUD assisted housing, including joint efforts to address and eliminate chronic absenteeism, find ways to support college students with unmet financial needs, and create more summer opportunities for young people.
Between the several jobs she worked and the scramble to feed her sons, often with food stamps, Sonya Carson used to recite a poem to keep her son Ben and his brother focused on lifting themselves out of their impoverished neighborhood in Detroit.

“If things go bad for you and make you a bit ashamed, often you will find out that you have yourself to blame,” Mayme White Miller’s poem begins. “You’re the captain of your ship, so agree with the same, if you travel downward you have yourself to blame.”

Those words, drummed into Ben Carson’s memory, appear to have framed the retired neurosurgeon’s views on urban renewal, mandated racial integration and the proper role of government in addressing the nation’s social woes. Now Mr. Carson, tapped by President-elect Donald J. Trump to become the next secretary of housing and urban development, will most likely have the power and opportunity to apply his mother’s conservative message to people’s lives as he heads an agency with a $47 billion budget and a charge to assist millions of low-income renters, fight urban blight and help struggling homeowners stave off foreclosures.

Mr. Carson has no experience running a large federal bureaucracy, and aside from a failed run for the presidency, has no background in government. But if confirmed by the Senate, he would enter public service with a background like few other cabinet officials in history, shaped profoundly by a childhood when public assistance meant survival and public housing was all around him.

Rather than embrace the programs that once sustained his family and the families around him, he has resolutely rejected them, adopting standard Republican beliefs that welfare fosters dependency. “The government should build and maintain infrastructure that supports population growth, business and self-improvement endeavors,” he wrote in his book, “A More Perfect Union.” “It should not, however, meddle in the affairs of all the citizens or control every aspect of their lives, as is done in many communist and socialist countries.”

Mr. Carson’s conservative views on government policy — coupled with the credibility his own remarkable story brings — worry experts who believe government should be doing more, not less, for the nation’s cities, where glittering downtowns and increasingly affluent neighborhoods are often surrounded by areas of poverty and violence, with predominantly minority residents. “The concern about government interference in the administration of housing programs in our cities, to me, seems unfounded,” said Stefanie A. Deluca, a professor of sociology at Johns Hopkins University who specializes in housing policy. “This danger of social engineering our cities and suburbs is overblown in comparison with the gains that we could be making in fair housing.”

But Mr. Carson’s views, born of his own bootstraps background, would be difficult to shake. “Everybody had working parents, and it prepared you for the fact you were going to have to work for a living,” said Steve Choice, 61, who grew up next door to Mr. Carson. “That was the American way. That was how you made your living, how you purchased things, and how the world moved. You had to work.”

Dorian Reeves, 65, a former classmate of Mr. Carson’s from Detroit, remembered his mother regularly summoning her son from playing basketball to study. “He didn’t go to the parties,” Mr. Reeves said. “He didn’t hang out at the football games. He would have to go home and he would have to study. He would always be reading. That’s what his mother wanted.”

Mr. Carson was awarded a scholarship to Yale University, and at 33, was named director of pediatric neurosurgery at Johns Hopkins Hospital. He became an author and a philanthropist supporting scholarships for young, often impoverished students.

Armstrong Williams, a conservative media personality and close friend of Mr. Carson’s, said that if confirmed, Mr. Carson would look closely at President Obama’s housing policies to decide which programs were encouraging federal dependency. “He just doesn’t want to walk in and say all the federal programs that take care of housing should be cut,” Mr. Williams said. “He wants to make it work for the people.”

Even while working as a surgeon with a heavy patient load, Mr. Carson spent much of his time traveling around the country trying to help inner-city children through the Carson Scholars Fund, a foundation he started, said Henry Brem, the chief of neurosurgery at Johns Hopkins Hospital who worked with Mr. Carson for 30 years. But for Mr. Carson, a devotion to bettering urban youth does not equate to promoting racial integration, at least not through government. In his memoir “Gifted Hands,” the word integration appears only once, when he said patients could not believe he had earned his position as the chief of pediatric neurosurgery.

“At first they eyed me suspiciously, wondering if somebody had given me my position as a token expression of integration,” he wrote. Such moments helped turn Mr. Carson against racial integration through policy. In an opinion article last year for The Washington Times, Mr. Carson compared an Obama administration housing regulation to “the failure of school busing.” The rule, known as Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing, was years in the making and was intended to end decades-old segregation by offering affluent areas incentives to build affordable housing. These government-engineered attempts to legislate racial equality create consequences that often make matters worse,” he wrote. “There are reasonable ways to use housing policy to enhance the opportunities available to
lower-income citizens, but based on the history of failed socialist experiments in this country, entrusting the government to get it right can prove downright dangerous."

The Rev. Derek McCoy, vice president of CURE, a nonprofit focused on culture, race and poverty on whose board Mr. Carson has served, said that thinking would remain at the core of Mr. Carson’s approach. “If it doesn’t have an exit date to it, then he probably won’t put an entry on it,” he said. “The things that have entry points and no exit points, I think he is going to have a real challenge with those.”

In interviews and writings, Mr. Carson has embraced standard conservative views that too much government help — both in desegregating neighborhoods and in lifting people from poverty — can discourage people from working hard. Coming from someone with his background, however, those views have far more power than when they are stated by someone like House Speaker Paul D. Ryan, who also speaks of the social safety net becoming a hammock. Ideology aside, the most pushback Mr. Carson has faced has come from his lack of expertise in housing policy. That is a concern even some of his oldest friends share.

“To me, it seems like they put him in the wrong job,” said Mr. Reeves, the former classmate of Mr. Carson’s from Detroit. “He’s very smart man, but he’s a brain surgeon. Why didn’t they let him deal with medicine and be like surgeon general? That’s the job I thought he would get. But that’s politics.”

--------------------

**Seattle Plans to Use Bond Funding to Pay for More Affordable Housing Units**

Northwest Public Television – January 8, 2017

Dave Tomson and his dog, Dennis, slept between cardboard walls under Interstate 5 in Seattle one night recently. Tomson is a block away from city call—in fact you can it from the corner. He picked this spot so he could stay dry. “It was raining and I’m not made out of sugar, but I don’t like to be cold and wet,” Tomson said. “Call me crazy.

Tomson is homeless, like more than 4,000 other people in the city. He’s lived on the streets for five years after he went to jail and lost his job, he said. “I wasn’t able to get back into work because I didn’t have a place to live,” Tomson said. With rent running around $900 a month on the low end in Seattle, it’s more than he can afford, he said.

Rents in Seattle are rising at some of the fastest rates in the nation, according to data from Zillow, leaving many out in the cold. Now the city is using a new approach to fund affordable housing: issuing bonds. This time, instead of funding parking meters and police stations, the bond money will help provide shelter to people who need it.

City councilmember, Lisa Herbold, led a proposal this fall to issue $29 million in new city bonds to pay for affordable housing. “We have a real interest in Seattle in trying to bring more people inside,” she said. Other places across the county with tight housing markets are also looking to bonds to fund housing. Voters in Baltimore, Silicon Valley, and Portland, Oregon approved ballot measures in November.

This will be the first time since the 1980s Seattle will use debt to pay for housing. Usually, the city issues bonds to fund infrastructure like the electric and sewer systems, and levies property taxes to pay for housing development. But those projects take at least three years to build, after they’re approved, Herbold said. “Our hope is to be able to do something much more quickly that doesn’t have these same sort of constraints,” she said.

The city is looking at a few different ideas to add more housing units. One is to put modular housing – which looks like shipping containers – on city-owned property to provide housing for chronically homeless people. Another idea is that the city would pay for seismic upgrades to buildings in exchange for making some of the units in those buildings more affordable.

The city needs to decide which projects to fund, and then issue the bonds in April for anywhere from 250 to 500 new units.
Submissions are now being accepted for the 2017 NMA Housing Awards!

In 2016, we honored four exceptional agencies that displayed innovation, determination, and creativity in their mission to generate real change in their communities. In 2017, we are looking for a new batch of the affordable housing industry's brightest stars to share their experiences and successes. There are four awards up for nomination:

- NMA Development Award (Large Agency)
- NMA Development Award (Small Agency)
- NMA Resident Service Award (Large Agency)
- NMA Resident Service Award (Small Agency)

Award winners will receive two free registrations to The Housing Conference this August in Boston, MA where they will be presented with an engraved trophy.

Don't miss the opportunity to put your agency in the spotlight and share your success! Entries are due Friday, April 28th, 2017.

---

HAI Group Acquires InspectUS Housing Inspection Software

CHESHIRE, Conn. (December 19, 2016) – Today marks an exciting milestone for HAI Group’s Software Solution as we announce the acquisition of InspectUS, a housing inspection software from The Inspection Group, Inc. HAI Group is a national provider of innovative solutions tailored for the public and affordable housing industry such as Software Solutions, Insurance Solutions, and Learning Solutions. The Inspection Group, Inc. will join HAI Group as an Authorized Reseller of InspectUS.

Chief Operating Officer of HAI Group’s Software Solution Anthony Peccerillo said, “With 18 years of inspection experience and more than three million inspections under their belt, it’s no surprise that more than 14,000 housing inspection professionals chose The Inspection Group, Inc. when learning how to improve inspections and the inspection process. When you combine this level of inspection expertise with inspection software designed by inspectors, it’s a natural fit with HAI Group’s Mission to evolve based on the housing industry’s needs.” For more information about HAI Group’s Software Solution, please visit www.housingcenter.com/software.

About HAI Group - HAI Group is a family of companies founded by and dedicated to serving the public and affordable housing community. We deliver innovative, tailor-made solutions to protect assets, improve efficiency, empower employees, and move housing strategies forward. Our portfolio includes insurance, software, capital, research, advocacy, and learning solutions. As a Member-owned organization, HAI Group has positioned itself as a recognized leader and expert in the public and affordable housing industry. Headquartered in Cheshire, Connecticut, HAI Group’s Membership extends across the United States. For more information about HAI Group, please visit www.housingcenter.com.

About The Inspection Group, Inc. - The Inspection Group, Inc. was founded in 1998 to provide HQS and UPCS inspection services to public housing agencies and affordable housing management companies. Over the years, The Inspection Group has put its unmatched experience to use in developing new inspection related consulting and training services, growing to become a full service company serving the needs of the Public and Affordable Housing Industry with a wide range of field data collection and analysis tools and services. The Inspection Group, Inc. continues to grow by offering innovative solutions and developing effective new field data collection and analysis tools for both the Public and Private National Housing Industry. For more information about The Inspection Group, please visit www.theinspectiongroup.com.
HUD Secretary Confirmation Hearing Scheduled for January 12
NAHRO News

Direct News - Washington Update
HUD Secretary Confirmation Hearing Scheduled for January 12

On January 12, 2017 at 10 a.m. EDT, the United States Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs will meet in open session to conduct a hearing on Dr. Ben Carson’s nomination to be HUD Secretary (link to hearing can be found [here](https://www.housingandurbandevelopment.gov/)). In light of this hearing and the impact that any HUD Secretary would have on Public Housing Agencies (PHAs) and Local Redevelopment Agencies (LRAs) across the country, NAHRO has put together four broad questions that we hope Dr. Ben Carson addresses in some form during the hearing.

What role does Dr. Carson believe the federal government has in providing affordable housing to low-income Americans? How interested and engaged will he be in the services that PHAs and LRAs provide to their communities? A famed neurosurgeon, Dr. Carson has never worked within the field of housing or urban development before. How do his qualifications as a surgeon translate into an understanding of complex, long-standing federal housing and redevelopment programs? How he leads HUD will greatly depend on whether he believes the federal government has an important role in the provision of affordable housing to low-income Americans or not. As someone with minimal experience in housing and urban development, it will be critical for Dr. Carson to articulate his vision of HUD’s role and how that will translate into his leadership of the agency.

It will also be important to discern how interested and engaged he will be as Secretary regarding the operation of public housing agencies (PHAs) and local redevelopment agencies (LRAs). This is a critical question to begin understanding the role that Dr. Carson feels PHAs and LRAs have in moving HUD’s agenda forward. His response will shed insight into the role he sees the federal government having in ending poverty and providing housing to those in need. His responses could also demonstrate the level of federal regulation he views is necessary to fulfill HUD’s mission compared to the level of local decision making required to successfully carry out these programs.

At this point, it is unclear if Dr. Carson views PHAs and LRAs as top priorities within HUD. We are currently unsure if his priorities will focus on the concerns PHAs and LRAs face, or if he will focus on other programs within the Department. PHAs and LRAs will be unable to carry out their missions if HUD does not operate effectively and efficiently. As such, it will be critical for Congress to ask Dr. Carson about how he will ensure program delivery and funding for PHAs and LRAs are properly deployed.

Will Dr. Carson ensure that residents of public housing have access to safe, secure housing by promoting modernization efforts, whether through increased funding or through increased access to private capital? The public housing inventory faces a mounting capital needs backlog, but Capital Fund appropriations continue to lag dangerously behind accruing modernization needs. At the same time, funding for operations has endured deep cuts, forcing PHAs to forego critical maintenance functions and further jeopardizing the long term sustainability of many properties. Each year, PHAs receive enough funding to address only about half of their newly occurring physical needs. Recent unfunded regulations from HUD have increased PHAs’ challenges in meeting the needs of their residents and properties. In light of these significant cuts to federal funding, there is a need for improved access to capital financing tools for PHAs. NAHRO would like to understand what Dr. Carson would do as Secretary to ensure PHAs can access additional capital for these critical modernization efforts if Capital and Operating fund appropriations remain underfunded.

Dr. Carson’s answer may also shed insight into the role that housing could play in an infrastructure bill as a means to access capital for public housing modernization. If questions by members of Congress address President-Elect Trump’s promise of a substantive infrastructure bill, Dr. Carson could provide better insight into whether he would push and encourage Congress to include housing in such a bill.

Does Dr. Carson believe that communities can best meet the needs of their residents through local decision making processes, or will he promulgate a top-down, regulation-heavy approach within the Department? PHAs and LRAs can best meet the needs of their properties and communities when they have access to a range of options from which to select. Local decision making is critical for the successful operation of PHAs and LRAs and ensures that PHAs and LRAs implement policies that make sense for their local communities. Often when HUD implements a one-size-fits-all approach, HUD encroaches upon established policies that have proven effective at the local level. Through this question, we would glean whether Dr. Carson believes in allowing local jurisdictions to determine appropriate policy solutions or if he would prefer to implement a far-reaching national one-size-fits-all approach.

Recently, there has been discussion regarding the regionalization of the Housing Choice Voucher Program. This is one example of a potential top-down regulation-heavy approach to limit PHAs and LRAs’ ability to serve their communities based upon local knowledge. Mandatory regionalization directly interferes with local decision making processes and assumes that small PHAs are ineffective in carrying out their mission. This is simply not true. PHAs are in the best position to decide if working with other PHAs makes sense for them and their local communities.

Often, PHAs face challenges due to meeting burdensome and time consuming federal regulations that can go against local decision making process. Reducing government oversight requires a combination of legislative and regulatory action. At the end of Dr. Carson’s hearing, it will be important to understand what his stance on local control and discretion will be.

How will Dr. Carson address capacity issues at HUD, especially if President-Elect Trump enacts a hiring freeze on the federal agency? Currently, HUD is staffed at historically low levels. President-Elect Trump has called for a hiring freeze on federal positions once he takes office. How will Dr. Carson ensure HUD is able to operate efficiently and provide on-time delivery of program management and funding? PHAs and LRAs are negatively impacted when HUD faces a backlog in the delivery of their services and funding.

Furthermore, NAHRO has already expressed concern about HUD’s capacity to complete successful and streamlined RAD transactions, especially if the cap on conversions is lifted. More administrative capacity is required from HUD to increase their internal capacity for the RAD program. How will Dr. Carson ensure the successful closing of RAD transactions if HUD capacity further decreases?

NAHRO is also concerned that the expansion of the MTW demonstration by 100 PHAs from 39 to 139 will put considerable stress on HUD’s MTW office. In the short term, HUD must be responsive and available to provide technical assistance on the potential cohort policy provisions and the application process for the PHAs that are interested in joining the MTW program. In the long term, HUD must have the capacity to collect and analyze the required data from the PHAs without placing a burden on the PHA that may skew the data being collected, specifically on the cost savings of operating MTW. More information on NAHRO’s 2017 Transition Report to the Incoming HUD Administration can be found [here](https://www.housingandurbandevelopment.gov/). Dr. Carson’s confirmation hearing can be streamed live on Thursday, January 12 at 10 am Eastern Time [here](https://www.housingandurbandevelopment.gov/).
UPCOMING CONFERENCES

2017 NAHRO Washington Conference
Advocacy for a Better Tomorrow
March 26-28 | Crystal Gateway Marriott Hotel | Arlington, VA

ALSO

July 16–18, 2017  
NAHRO National Summer Conference  
Indianapolis, Indiana

October 27-29, 2017  
Annual NAHRO National Conference & Exhibit  
Pittsburgh, PA

2017 Vendor Registration for Maintenance & Management Clinic:  
April 19, 2017 | 1:00pm to April 21, 2017, 12:00pm | Decatur Conference Center and Hotel | 4191 US 36 West, Decatur, IL 62522 | http://www.hoteldecatur.com/c/

2017 Illinois Governor’s Conference on Affordable Housing, co-hosted by the Illinois Housing Council and Illinois Housing Development Authority | March 13-14, 2107 | Hyatt Regency Hotel | Chicago, IL

2017 Annual Convention & Exhibition:  
April 30-May 3, 2017 | Hilton Hotel | Chicago, IL

SAVE THE DATE

August 16-18, 2017 – Joint Conference of the Illinois / Indiana NAHRO chapters will be held in Springfield, IL at the President Abraham Lincoln Hotel. More information coming soon.
IL NAHRO is pleased to announce that the annual “What Home Means to Me” poster contest for children from kindergarten through Grade 12 who live in affordable and assisted housing is officially underway. The State Chapter will submit the Illinois winning posters from each age category to the regional council of NAHRO for regional judging. The three state winners will be recognized during the IL Annual Conference. Submissions sent directly to national NAHRO will be disqualified.

To download the poster contest entry rules, application and narrative forms, visit NAHRO website at http://www.housingamericacampaign.org/what-home-means-to-me.html. The deadline for submission of posters for IL NAHRO is Friday, March 31, 2017.

One grand prize and 12 national winners will be selected in September and featured in the 2016 What Home Means to Me calendar which highlights the importance of safety, quality, and affordable housing for not only children, but all families, veterans, seniors and persons with disabilities.

Winners from all eight NAHRO regions will be selected. The national grand prize winner will be awarded an iPad, honored at NAHRO's Washington Conference in Washington, D.C., tour Capitol Hill, and receive a framed copy of their original artwork. The 12 national winners will be awarded each with a $100 Visa gift card.

Have questions about the poster contest process? Contact Carmen Smith at csmith@nahro.org. Visit the newly rebranded Housing America website at: http://www.nahro.org/housing-america. Questions nationally? Contact Carmen Smith at csmith@nahro.org. Questions regionally? Contact Anna Judge at Annajudge@dakotacda.state.mn.us. Questions in Illinois? Contact Kim Holman-Short kimh@bloomingtonha.com or 309/829-3360 ext. 204.

PHA RECEIVES $246,000 TO PROMOTE JOBS, SELF-SUFFICIENCY FOR PUBLIC HOUSING RESIDENTS

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) recently awarded $32 million to public housing authorities, public housing resident associations, Native American tribes, and non-profit organizations across the nation to hire or retain service coordinators to help residents find jobs, educational opportunities, and achieve economic and housing independence. The funding is provided through the Resident Opportunities for Self Sufficiency- Service Coordinators (ROSS-SC) Grant. Peoria Housing Authority was one of only five agencies to receive this grant in Illinois.

The purpose of HUD's ROSS program is to encourage innovative and locally driven strategies that link public housing assistance with public and private resources to enable participating families to increase earned income; reduce or eliminate the need for welfare assistance; make progress towards achieving economic independence and housing self-sufficiency and to serve seniors and individuals with disabilities by helping them age-in-place; avoid long-term care; and improve their living conditions and quality of life.

The Peoria Housing Authority's mission is to provide affordable housing opportunities and develop programs that enhance the lives of its residents by offering numerous opportunities for self-sufficiency. In 2016 the Supportive Services Program at Peoria Housing Authority had a total cost savings of $307,942.20 for services rendered to the residents of Sterling Towers. The cost savings from January 2016 through December 2016 is six times higher than the annual salary of the Service Coordinator. The ROSS Grant has served over 250 residents for a total of 11,400 services rendered. However, it is the personal stories of each resident served that truly paints the picture of the success of this program.

Jane Doe came from homelessness to Peoria Housing Authority. She was so happy to leave the homeless shelter and get her own apartment, but when she came to PHA she didn't have anything but a few bags of clothes. The ROSS Grant Coordinator was able to connect her with the Benevolence Center and the ReStore to get her all the essential furniture items for her apartment. After sleeping
two weeks on the floor she finally had a bed, a couch, T.V., a kitchen table and chairs. Jane finally had the essentials of living in her apartment, but she still didn’t have an income and was having difficulty paying her rent every month. She didn’t want to continue to borrow the money from her adult children. She believed that no parent should have to borrow money from their children. The ROSS Grant Coordinator was able to connect her with Township General Relief Assistance so she could pay her rent while the Coordinator helped her apply for disability. She had not been able to work for a few years and the coordinator used the SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access, and Recovery (SOAR) process to get her on SSI. She was approved after 3 months and now has a sustainable income for the first time in several years. She has been living at Peoria Housing Authority for nearly 4 years now and is an excellent tenant who is now stable and happy. She spreads the love by donating coffee to the resident council on a monthly basis so all the residents can enjoy free coffee every day. It is her way of giving back now that she is able to.

Peoria Housing Authority benefits from these services as it results in fewer evictions, increased rent from higher incomes, happier and more satisfied residents, less strain on Asset Management for issues that can be taken care of by the Service Coordinator and increased professional networking and community impact and involvement. The ROSS grant can change the lives of individuals and help build more sustainable communities.

---

PHA RECEIVES $748,000 FROM CHICAGO FEDERAL HOME LOAN BANK HOUSING PROGRAM TO ASSIST WITH PRESERVATION OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN PEORIA

The Peoria Housing Authority and The Model Group are pleased to announce the 2016 Chicago Federal Home Loan Bank Affordable Housing Program (AHP) award of $748,000, with member Morton Community Bank, for Taft Homes Redevelopment Phase II! This critical resource makes possible the construction of 44 new rental units as part of a Rental Assistance Demonstration program, providing for the preservation of affordable housing in downtown Peoria.

Designed by Farnsworth Group, Inc. the innovative urban infill project includes a cozy pocket park overlooked on either side by three-story garden apartment buildings with a contemporary urban design. The design of these buildings incorporates durable materials for longevity and reduced life cycle costs, along with a hybrid building insulation to create welcoming, high performance, energy efficient homes. With sustainable practices in mind, the site utilizes an attractive, maintenance friendly landscaping with a system of interconnected swales, dry wells, and storm drains to minimize the storm water runoff. A pocket park between the buildings will feature a playground and family gathering with picnic tables, grills, bike racks, and community garden plots. In addition, a continuous walking path surrounds the site, taking advantage of the proximity to the trail along the Illinois River and creating a connection with the existing RiverFront Park. Promoting healthy lifestyles and opportunities for neighbor engagement are benefits of the design. Residents on site participated in prioritizing project design amenities.

This first phase of redevelopment replaces five buildings of low-income public housing at Taft Homes that were placed in service in 1955 and will be located at the rear of the site on approximately 2.5 acres. The total estimated development cost is projected to be $9.4 million. Resident empowerment and referral services will be provided, consistent with the AHP application, from the housing authority, METEC, Illinois Central College, PCCEO, and Advocates for Access. Additional funding review processes are in progress including low income housing tax credits and DCEO energy efficiency funding. This process of reviews and approvals are expected to be complete for a groundbreaking in 2017.

Many organizations have provided support to the development team throughout this process for whom we are grateful! Special thanks go to The Model Group, Morton Community Bank, LISC, Farnsworth Group, Baker Tilly Virchow Krause LLP, HUD, the Communities Group, Councilwomen Denise Moore, and the City of Peoria staff in addition to our partner agencies who will assist with resource and referral services to the families we serve. The Peoria Housing Authority is excited to provide new quality affordable housing, competitive with the private market, for low income families in Peoria County.
IL NAHRO – Mission Statement

NAHRO makes available resources for its members and others who provide decent, safe, affordable housing, and viable communities that enhance the quality of life for all Americans, especially those of low- and moderate-income by:

- Ensuring that housing and community development professionals have the leadership skills, education, information and tools to serve communities in a rapidly changing environment;
- Advocating for appropriate laws, adequate funding levels and responsible public policies that address the needs of the people served; are financially and programmatically viable for our industry; are flexible, reduce regulatory burdens and promote local decision-making.
- Fostering the highest standards of ethical behavior, service and accountability to ensure public trust.

NAHRO enhances the professional development and effectiveness of its members and the industry through its comprehensive professional development curriculum, including certifications; conferences; and publications. These efforts work to equip NAHRO’s members with the skills, knowledge and resources necessary to succeed and prosper in a changing environment.

Membership Renewals

It is that time of year!!! Time to consider renewing your membership or consider joining the Illinois Chapter of NAHRO. Your decision to continue or join ILNAHRO through membership keeps the association strong and helps us in our common mission of seeking excellence in both public and affordable housing as well as community and economic development.

If you are not a member, this is your opportunity to join forces with other PHA’s and CD organizations. Please consider joining us this Fiscal Year, there are exciting things on the horizon as we “Build Communities Together – through Affordable Housing”.

Please renew or join TODAY. Complete the enclosed form and return it with the appropriate payment to the ILNAHRO Coordinator. This will ensure your membership benefits begin promptly.

Let us know if we can be of service at any time.
Paul E. Bollinger, CPM®, ARM® pbollinger@pha.peoria.il.us
309-677-7306

Membership Application and Renewal Form

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

IL NAHRO Membership Services welcomes the following new members and vendors:

- East Peoria Housing Authority
- Effingham County Housing Agency
- Lee County Housing Authority
- Logan Housing Authority
- HAB Housing Software Solutions
- Lindsey Software
Advertising Rate Sheet

The Illinois Chapter of NAHRO is a professional membership association of housing and community development agencies and individuals. All editions will be sent by e-mail to the entire IL NAHRO membership and posted on the IL NAHRO website.

The newsletter is put out 10 times a year, January, February, March, April, May June, July/August, September, October and November/December. Our current subscription list encompasses over 13 members/individuals.

Submission deadlines are 20th of each month.

The advertising rates for the newsletter are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Finished Ad Size (width x length)</th>
<th>Cost Per Issue</th>
<th>Cost For All 10 Issues</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full page 7.5&quot; x 10&quot;</td>
<td>$75</td>
<td>$675</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Half Page 7.5&quot; x 5&quot;</td>
<td>$50</td>
<td>$450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quarter Page 3.5&quot; x 5&quot;</td>
<td>$30</td>
<td>$270</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium/Small 3.5&quot; x 3.5&quot;</td>
<td>$25</td>
<td>$225</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Card 3.5&quot; x 2.5&quot;</td>
<td>$15</td>
<td>$135</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Website Company Link

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Website Company Link</th>
<th>Cost For Link – 1 Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Banner Logo Link</td>
<td>$100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you are interested in advertising with us, please send a high resolution file (at least 300 dpi) to info@ilnahro.org by submission deadline indicated above. Acceptable files include: .tiff, .eps, .pdf, or .jpeg or .png). If you have any questions please contact Brenda Bruner, Executive Assistant at 217/753-5757, ext. 206 or by email at info@ilnahro.org.

Return form to IL NAHRO, Springfield Housing Authority, 200 North Eleventh Street, Springfield, IL 62703.

Company Name: ________________________________________________________________

Contact Person: ________________________________________________________________

Address: ______________________________________________________________________

City/State/Zip: _________________________________________________________________

Phone: _______________________________________________________________________

Amount Enclosed: ___________________________ Paid With Check #: ________________

Ad Size (Circle) | Full Page | Half Page | Quarter Page | Medium/Small | Business Card |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July/August</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
President
Jackie L. Newman, Executive Director
Springfield Housing Authority
(217) 753-5757, Ext. 206
Jackie.newman@sha1.org

Senior Vice President
Alan Zais, Executive Director
Winnebago County Housing Authority
(815) 963-2133
alan@wchauthority.com

Secretary
Felicia Davis
Winnebago County Housing Authority
(815) 963-2133, Ext. 117
Felicia@wchauthority.com

Treasurer
Jodi Stromberg, Redevelopment Project Manager
jodik65@comcast.net

Past President
Vacant

Vice President—CR&D
Karen Davis, Economic Development Director
City of Springfield
Office of Planning & Economic Development
(217) 789-2377
Karen.Davis@springfield.il.us

Vice President—Housing
Kim Holman-Short, Executive Director
Bloomington Housing Authority
(309) 829-3360
kimh@bloomingtonha.com

Vice President—Professional Development
Kate Brown, Senior Housing Research Specialist
University of Illinois at Urban-Champaign
School of Architecture
(217) 244-6769
cbrown4@uiuc.edu

Vice President—Member Services
Paul Bollinger, Chief Executive Officer
Peoria Housing Authority
(309) 677-7306
pbollinger@pha.peoria.il.us

Vice President—Commissioners
Vacant

Vice President—International
Ron Clewer, Chief Executive Officer
Rockford Housing Authority
(815) 489-8570
rclewer@rockfordha.org

Legislative Liaison
David Young, Director of Technical Assistance
Housing Action Illinois (HAI)
(312) 939-6074, Ext. 202
david@housingactionil.org

NCRC At Large Representative—2 Year
William Pluta, Director, OHCS
IHDA
(312) 836-5354
wpluta@ihda.org

NCRC At Large Representative—4 Year
Alan Zais, Executive Director
Winnebago County Housing Authority
(815) 963-2133
alan@wchauthority.com

Emerging Leaders Representative
Keon Jackson, Director of Capital Improvements
Lake County Housing Authority
(847) 223-1170, Ext. 224
k.jackson@lakecountyha.org

At Large Member
Larry Williams, Executive Director
City of Freeport Housing Authority
(815) 232-4171, Ext. 1015
lwilliams@hacf.us

Vendor Liaison
Saul Himelstein, President/CEO
The Inspection Group
866/727-7732 or (614) 891-4626
saul@theinspectiongroup.com

Housing America/Poster Contest
Kim Holman-Short, Executive Director
Bloomington Housing Authority
(309) 829-3360
kimh@bloomingtonha.com

#WHAAAt
What Has Your Housing Authority Accomplished Today?