



## NHC Member Brief



Weekly update from the National Housing Conference

### In this issue

Feb. 2, 2020 | Issue 4

- Lawmakers grill Otting on CRA proposal
- Democrats unveil infrastructure, housing plans
- Harvard Joint Center releases report on rental housing
- FICO to change how it calculates credit scores
- Durham public housing rally after carbon monoxide leaks
- Supreme Court allows public charge rule to take effect
- **Chart of the Week:** Three in four at-risk renters do not receive federal rental assistance

### Is rent control the answer to solving the housing affordability crisis?

One issue dominating housing policy today is rent control. It has re-emerged as our affordable housing and homelessness crises have worsened. This week, I spoke at the Urban Land Institute's Mid-Winter Meeting of Global Governing Trustees as the guest of NHC Board of Governors member Christopher Ptomey. NHC is working on publishing a collection of papers on rent control with ULI's Terwilliger Center for Housing. It's a controversial topic. However, without building more affordable housing units, the law of supply and demand will continue to drive up rents, and the laws of politics guarantee we'll be talking about rent control for the foreseeable future.

As we show in NHC's [Paycheck to Paycheck database](#), few occupations in cities like Washington D.C. can afford a two or three-bedroom apartment, and many can't afford a one-bedroom unit. But the crisis isn't limited to high cost markets on the coasts. Of course, the poster child of unaffordability is San Francisco. There, five bank tellers can barely afford to live together in a three bedroom apartment. At least one of them gets their own bedroom!

[Continue here](#)

## News from Washington | By Tristan Bréaux and Quinn Mulholland

### Lawmakers grill Otting on CRA proposal

On Wednesday, the House Financial Services Committee [held a hearing](#) on the recent proposal by the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency (OCC) and the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) to overhaul the Community Reinvestment Act (CRA). The hearing, which featured testimony from Comptroller of the Currency Joseph Otting, the head of the OCC, came after [a Financial Services subcommittee hearing](#) earlier this month on the proposal. At the full committee hearing, Chairwoman Maxine Waters (D-Calif.) [criticized](#) Otting for proposing a rule "that runs contrary to the purpose of the CRA and would lead to widespread bank disinvestment from low- and moderate-communities throughout the country." Ranking Member Patrick McHenry (R-N.C.), meanwhile, [praised the proposed rule](#), saying it "will increase the transparency and objectivity that is currently lacking in CRA examinations today and will increase the effectiveness of the statute generally."

### Democrats unveil infrastructure, housing plans

House Democrats [unveiled](#) a \$760 billion infrastructure plan on Wednesday, which includes several housing-related measures, in addition to a host of items around transportation and climate mitigation. The

### Harvard Joint Center releases report on rental housing

On Friday, the Harvard Joint Center for Housing Studies [released](#) its annual report on America's rental housing stock. According to the report, there were significantly more middle- and high-income

housing-related measures [include](#) an expansion of tax credits like the New Markets Tax Credit, Low-Income Housing Tax Credit and Historic Tax Credit to incentivize infrastructure investment, as well as an \$80 billion investment in expanding rural broadband service. Also on Wednesday, a group of progressive House Democrats [held a press conference](#) to introduce the “People’s Housing Platform,” which calls for, among other things, measures to strengthen tenant rights, invest in the construction of new public housing units, and replace the Opportunity Zones program with a Community Benefits Fund that would allocate grants to community land trusts and local nonprofits.

renters in 2018 than in 2010. The report also found that an increasing number of renters with incomes between \$30,000 and \$75,000 are spending more than 30 percent of their income on housing, and a whopping 72 percent of the lowest-income renters are spending more than 50 percent of their income on rent. These high levels of cost burdens are likely driven by a dwindling supply of low-cost rental units, which the report found decreased by over 3 million since 2012. At [the launch event](#) for the report, several experts spoke on the findings and the broader affordability crisis for renters, including Minneapolis Federal Reserve President and CEO Neel Kashkari, CommonBond Communities President and CEO Deidre Schmidt, and Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey.



Join these leading experts  
& more at #SolutionsComms!

**Breakout session:**  
Advocating to end  
homelessness



**Tom Murphy**  
National Alliance to  
End Homelessness

**Breakout session:**  
GoodComm: Messaging  
for affordable housing



**Mackenzie Price**  
FrameWorks Institute

**Breakout session:**  
Harnessing the power of  
digital media in 2020 & beyond



**Holli Beckman**  
WC Smith

### FICO to change how it calculates credit scores

The Fair Isaac Corporation, which creates FICO scores, [announced recently](#) that it will soon change how it calculates the credit scores that determine many Americans’ access to loans like home mortgages. Fannie Mae Chief Economist Doug Duncan [told Yahoo Finance](#) that the FICO changes could keep riskier borrowers out of the housing market. However, National Mortgage News [reported](#) that home lenders may not use these new scores if Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac don’t adopt them, which remains to be seen. On Wednesday, the House of Representatives [passed a package of legislation](#) sponsored by Rep. Ayanna Pressley (D-Mass.), which would overhaul the credit reporting system, including bills from Reps. Alma Adams (D-N.C.), Rashida Tlaib (D-Mich.) and Joyce Beatty (D-Ohio), which would provide consumers a right to appeal disputed items on their consumer reports, limit how long adverse credit information stays on consumer reports, and direct credit reporting agencies to give consumers free

### Durham public housing rally after carbon monoxide leaks

After [111 families were evacuated](#) from a Durham, North Carolina public housing community amid concerns about carbon monoxide leaks early in January, the displaced residents are now [calling on](#) local officials to take action to address the crisis. The residents were relocated from the community, McDougald Terrace, to 13 hotels across the Durham area, but [many complained](#) that conditions in the hotels are intolerable. The story has received attention from [national media outlets](#), as well as from Democratic presidential candidate Bernie Sanders, who hosted a town hall on affordable housing in Durham that [many McDougald Terrace residents attended](#). One reason the plight of the residents has received so much attention is because [it is a dramatic example of a national crisis](#) in public housing projects across the country as a result of neglect and a lack of funding. “The situation in Durham underscores the result of years of underfunding public housing,” Representative David Price (D-N.C.), who

copies of their credit scores, among other things.

represents the McDougald Terrace residents in Congress and is the chairman of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development, told INDY Week. In another recent example, [an investigation](#) by The Oregonian found dangerous levels of radon in public housing projects across the country, causing federal lawmakers [to call for protections](#).

## Supreme Court allows public charge rule to take effect

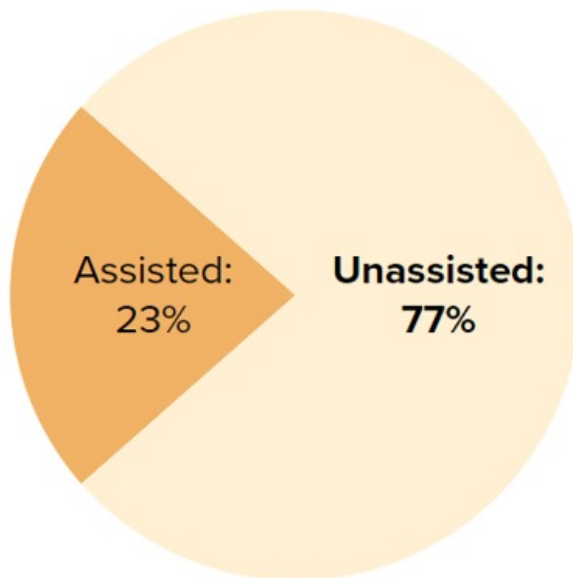
On Monday, the Supreme Court [allowed](#) the Trump administration to enforce its “public charge” rule, which would deny green cards to immigrants who use public benefits including housing assistance, in a 5-4 ruling. The Trump administration [issued the final rule](#) in August, and faced immediate blowback from housing advocates and public officials. The Supreme Court ruling, similarly, led to fierce criticism from congressional Democrats, with Senate Finance Committee Ranking Member Ron Wyden (D-Ore.) [issuing a statement](#) decrying the ruling and saying, “This cruel policy threatens our economy and will create a poorer, sicker and hungrier nation.” Multiple lawsuits concerning the rule continue to make their way through lower courts, and [it remains possible](#) that the Supreme Court will revisit the issue.

## Chart of the Week

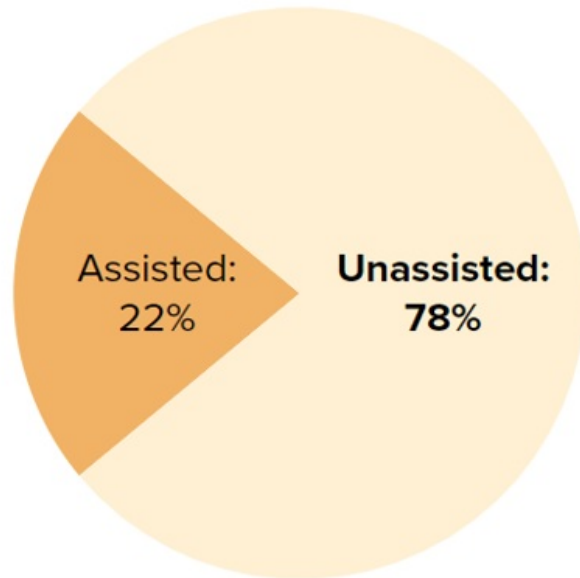
### Three in four at-risk renters do not receive federal rental assistance

A [recent report](#) from the **Center on Budget and Policy Priorities** on how housing and health partners can work together included a graphic showing that more than three in four of the 17 million at-risk renter households eligible for rental assistance who do not receive. For at-risk families with children, that figure is even higher, at 78 percent.

All at-risk renters



Families with children



Source: Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) custom tabulations of the 2015 American Housing Survey; 2016 HUD administrative data; FY2016 McKinney-Vento Permanent Supportive Housing bed counts; 2015-2016 Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS grantee performance profiles; and the USDA FY2016 Multi-Family Fair Housing Occupancy Report.

## What we're reading

Enterprise Community Partners CEO Priscilla Almodovar wrote an op-ed for **Business Insider** on how to prepare for the next climate-related disaster. In the op-ed, she argues for state and local governments to pass laws to help their communities become more resilient against the effects of climate change. [Read](#)

[the op-ed here.](#)

The **National Housing Law Project** recently released a guidebook on how to accomplish smoke-free public housing in an equitable way. The guidebook aims to help public housing agencies, tenants, and advocates who seek to find a balance between promoting smoke-free environments and ensuring access to affordable housing. [Read the guidebook here.](#)

According to a report released by the **National Center for Homeless Education** on Wednesday, the number of public school students experiencing homelessness reached an all-time high of roughly 1.5 million in the 2017-2018 school year. This represented an increase of 15 percent over the 2015-2016 school year. [Read the report here.](#)

## The week ahead

*Monday, February 3*

- [MBA Independent Mortgage Bankers Conference](#) Feb. 3-6

*Tuesday, February 4*

- [Transit Equity Day 2020](#), 6:30-8 p.m. ET

*Wednesday, February 5*

- [Urban Institute event on institutional investors' impact on the housing market](#), 12:30-2 p.m. ET
- [National Housing Law Project webinar on equitable smoke-free public housing](#) 1-2 p.m. ET
- House Financial Services Subcommittee on Housing, Community Development and Insurance hearing on public housing, 2-4 p.m. ET

*Thursday, February 6*

- [HousingWire engage.talent conference](#), 8:30 a.m.-6:15 p.m. ET
- [2020 NAR Policy Forum](#), 10 a.m.-4 p.m. ET
- House Financial Services Committee oversight hearing on the CFPB, 10 a.m.-12 p.m. ET
- House Financial Services Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations hearing on astroturfing in the rulemaking process, 2-4 p.m. ET
- [NYU Furman Center event on using CoreData and the Displacement Alert Project Portal](#) 2-3 p.m. ET

*Saturday, February 8*

- [NAREB 2020 Mid-Winter Conference](#), Feb. 8-13
- [DC Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development event on housing](#) 10 a.m.-12 p.m. ET

STAY CONNECTED



[www.nhc.org](http://www.nhc.org)

The National Housing Conference has been defending the American Home since 1931. We believe everyone in America should have equal opportunity to live in a quality, affordable home in a thriving community. NHC convenes and collaborates with our diverse membership and the broader housing and community development sectors to advance our policy, research and communications initiatives to effect positive change at the federal, state and local levels. Politically diverse and nonpartisan, NHC is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization.

[Join/Renew Today!](#)

*Defending our American Home since 1931*

Copyright © 2020. All Rights Reserved.