Federal Housing Advocacy for Local Impact

Opportunity Starts at Home, Minnesota Chapter

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Welcome

Henry Banks

Housing activist and Board Chair of the Damiano Center



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What is OSAH-MN?

Sedia Omar

New American Development Center (NADC)



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OSAH Campaign Mission

To build a national multi-sector movement which generates widespread support for federal policies that protect and expand affordable housing for low-income people

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OSAH: Policy Goals - national



- Dramatically expand rental assistance to every eligible household
- Expand housing for the most under-resourced households
- Provide emergency rental assistance to prevent housing instability and homelessness



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Images from nlihc.org (hoUSed Campaign)

Minnesota Chapter: OSAH



- Educate & train on federal housing advocacy
- Influence policy solutions
- Build relationships, including with Minnesota Members of Congress
- Invest in OSAH members

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Federal Advocacy 101

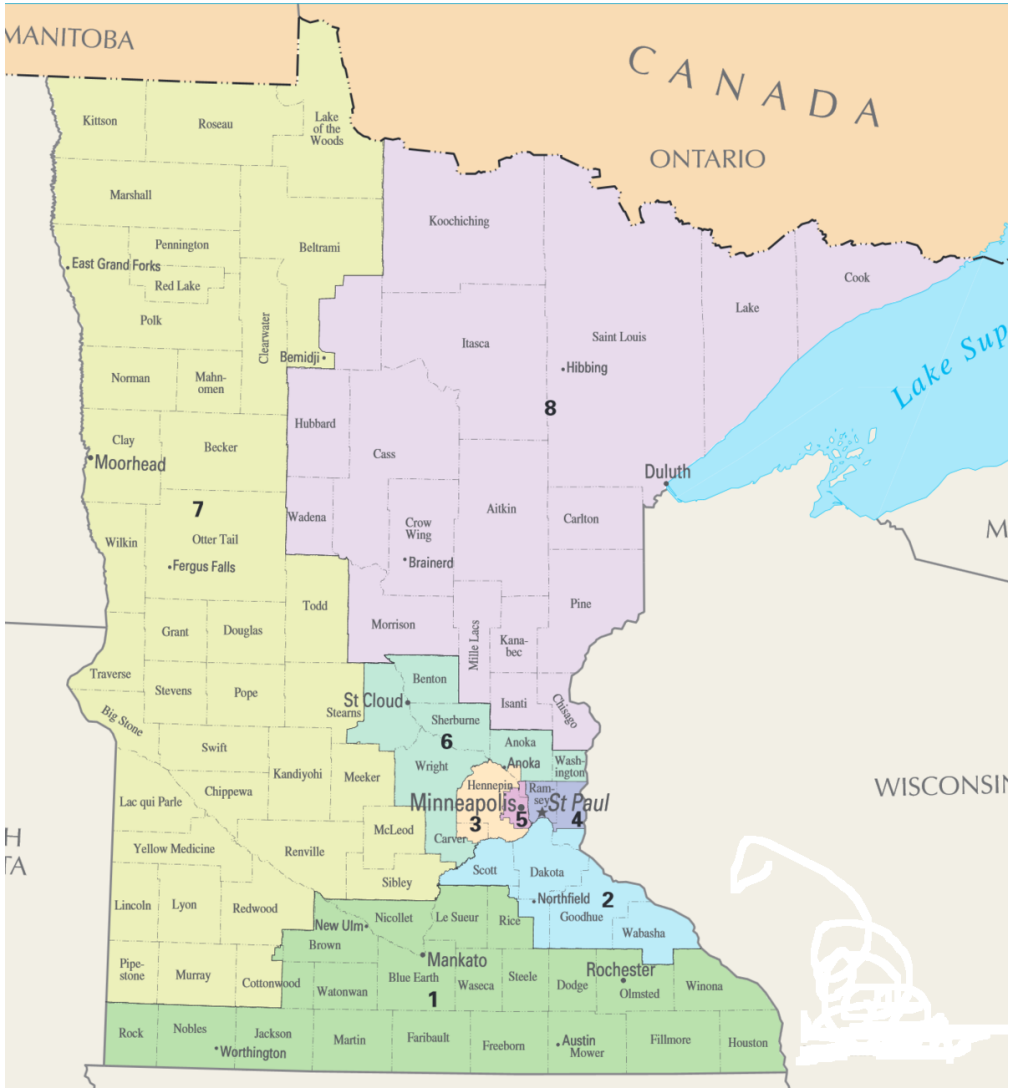
Sue Watlov Phillips

Metropolitan Interfaith Council on Affordable Housing (MICAH)



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Who represents MN in Congress?



Members of the U.S. House of Representatives



Congressman Hagedorn
District 1

Committee on Agriculture



Congressman Phillips
District 3



Congresswoman Craig
District 2

Committee on Agriculture



Congresswoman McCollum
District 4

Appropriations Committee

Ag and Rural Development Appropriations Subcommittee

U.S. House Members Continued



Congresswoman Omar
District 5

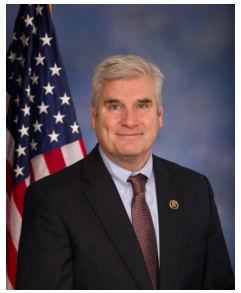
Budget Committee

Education and Labor Committee



Congresswoman Fischbach
District 7

Committee on Agriculture



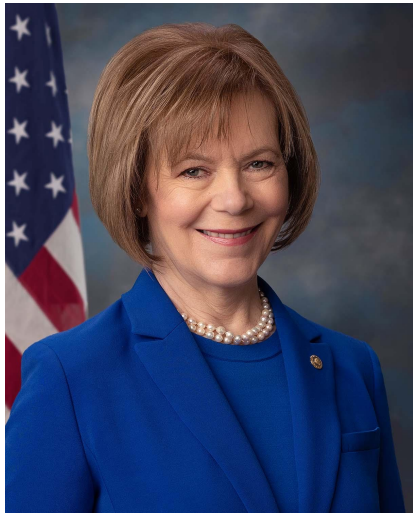
Congressman Emmer
District 6

Committee on Financial Services



Congressman Stauber
District 8

Members of the U.S. Senate



Senator Tina Smith

Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry

Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs committee

Health, Education Labor And Pensions Committee

Indian Affairs



Senator Amy Klobuchar

Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry

Sarah Saadian

Seniors Vice President for Public Policy and Field Organizing

National Low Income Housing Coalition (NLIHC)

ssaadian@nlihc.org



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Overview: Key Committees

NATIONAL LOW INCOME HOUSING COALITION

Senate and House Appropriations Committees

- Betty McCollum (D-MN)

Senate Banking and House Financial Services Committees

- Senator Tina Smith (D-MN), Chair of the Housing, Transportation, and Community Development Subcommittee
- Rep. Tom Emmer (R-MN)

Senate Finance & House Ways and Means Committees

Overview: Appropriations

NATIONAL LOW INCOME HOUSING COALITION

Appropriations Calendar

- February – President Releases Budget Request
- March – May – Members of Congress submit their spending priorities
- June – July – Appropriations committees start to draft their spending bills, and vote on the bills in committee.
  - This year, the subcommittee will vote on the housing bill on June 23, and the full committee will vote June 30.
- October 1 – New fiscal year starts

Final spending bills have been pushed back to December or even the following year, putting strain on programs and partners.

Advocate for Housing Funding in FY23

NATIONAL LOW INCOME HOUSING COALITION

FY23 Top Priorities:

- $32.1 billion to renew all existing Housing Choice Voucher Contracts and expand vouchers to at least 200,000 more low-income households;
- $5.125 billion for the Public Housing Capital Fund and $5.06 billion for the Public Housing Operating Fund;
- At least $3.6 billion in HUD's Homeless Assistance Grant programs to help end homelessness;
- At least $100 million for legal aid services to prevent evictions; and
- $300 million to the competitive tribal housing block grant program and target it to communities with the greatest needs.

Advocate for Housing Funding in FY23

NATIONAL LOW INCOME HOUSING COALITION

1. **Sign a national letter**, urging Congress to fund housing, homelessness, and community development programs at the highest level possible! Sign here!

2. **Contact your members of Congress** and urge them to support the housing programs you care about!

Overview: Enacting Legislation

NATIONAL LOW INCOME HOUSING COALITION

Authorizing Committees:

- Hold hearings on important issues and hear testimony from federal, state, and local experts.
- Vote on legislation and amendments.

Take Action:

- **Weigh in with your members of Congress** – especially those on key committees – about needed legislation.
- **Share ideas** about changes that could help programs work better, or ideas for new programs.

Top OSAH Priorities

NATIONAL LOW INCOME HOUSING COALITION

Eviction Crisis Act (S.2182)

Introduced by Sens. Bennet (D-CO) and Portman (R-OH), and its House companion bill "Stable Families Act" from Rep. Torres (D-NY). The bill would create a permanent emergency rental assistance program.

Ask your members of Congress to cosponsor. Sign our national support letter here!

Family Stability and Opportunities Act (S.1991)

Introduced by Sens. Van Hollen (D-MD) and Young (R-IN). The bill would create 500K vouchers and mobility services to help families with children move to areas of their choice.

Ask your members of Congress to cosponsor.

Build Support for Key Legislation

NATIONAL LOW INCOME HOUSING COALITION

Ask your members of Congress to cosponsor key legislation.

Find a list of bills endorsed by NLIHC's HoUSed campaign here:
https://nlihc.org/sites/default/files/housed_Key-Legislation.pdf

Housing Investments in a Reconciliation Bill

NATIONAL LOW INCOME HOUSING COALITION

Budget Reconciliation

- **$25 billion** to expand rental assistance to more than 300,000 households.
- **$65 billion** to make critically needed repairs to public housing and preserve this valuable asset for its 2 million residents.
- **$15 billion** for the national Housing Trust Fund to build and preserve over 150,000 affordable, accessible homes for households with the lowest incomes.

Join more than 1,800 advocacy organizations on a national letter, urging Congress to include these targeted housing investments. Sign here!

NATIONAL LOW INCOME HOUSING COALITION

Thank You!

Sarah Saadian

ssaadian@nlihc.org

Making the case: Need for housing resources

Elizabeth Glidden

Minnesota Housing Partnership (MHP)

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Minnesota Cost Burdened Households

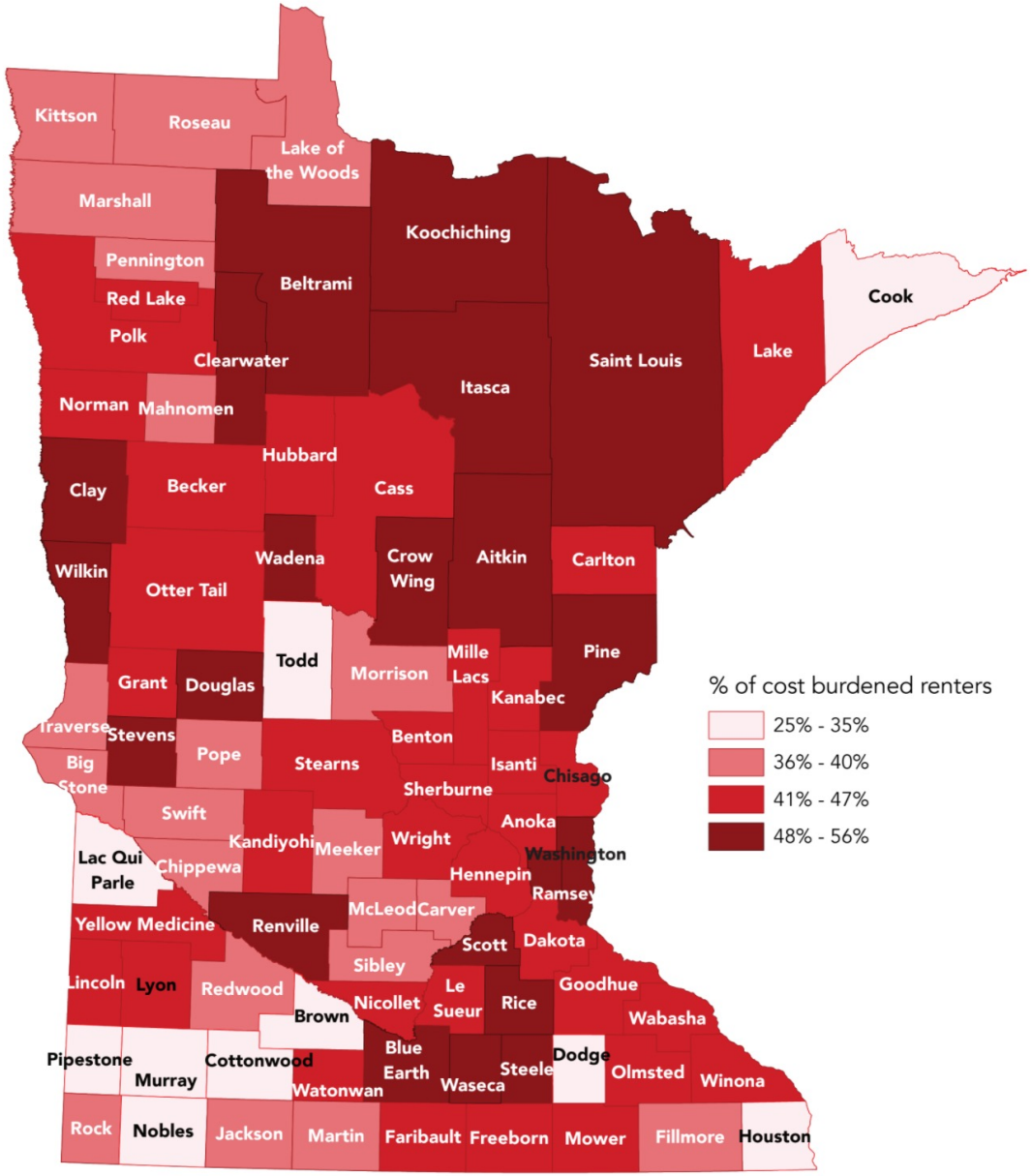
More than **554,272** households (25%) - **homeowners and renters** - pay more than they can afford for housing



25%
of Minnesota households pay more than they can afford for housing

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Renter Cost Burden

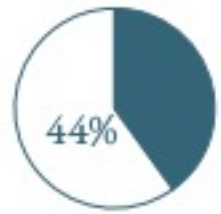


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MHP 2021 SOTS

Renter Cost Burden Disaggregated by Race and Income

Cost Burdened Renters: 268,764



white renter households



Black renter households



renters < $35,000 income

Severe Cost Burdened Renters: 130,332



white renter households

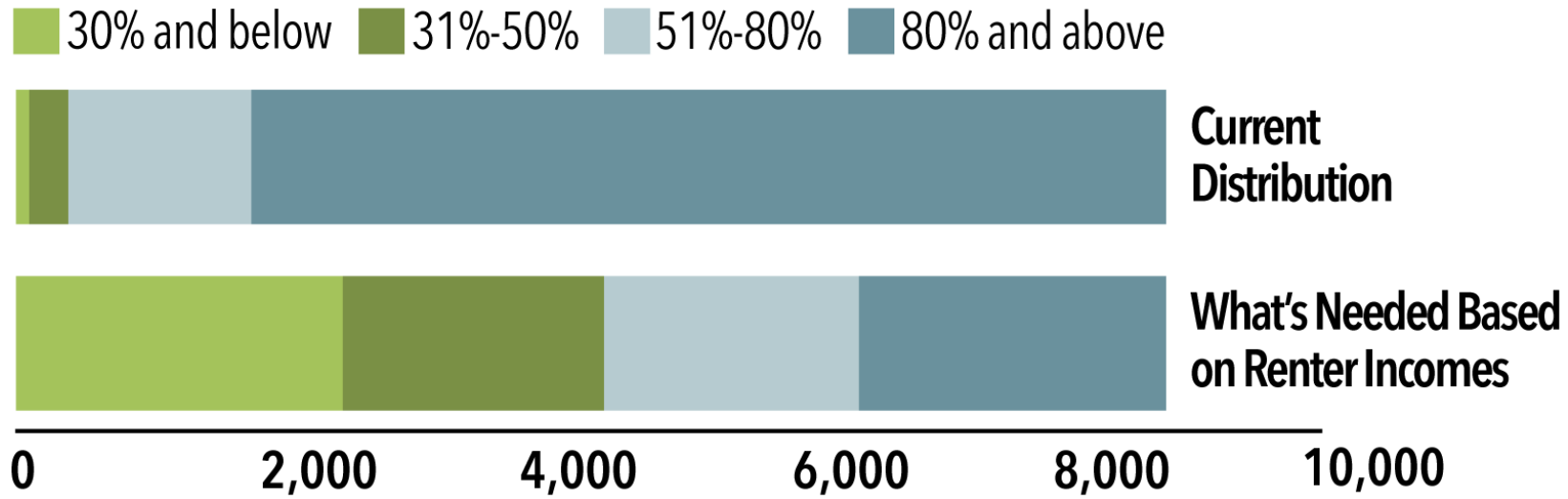


Black renter households

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Housing Production in Minnesota

There is a severe mismatch between market supply and market demand. Production of new units is skewed toward higher incomes.

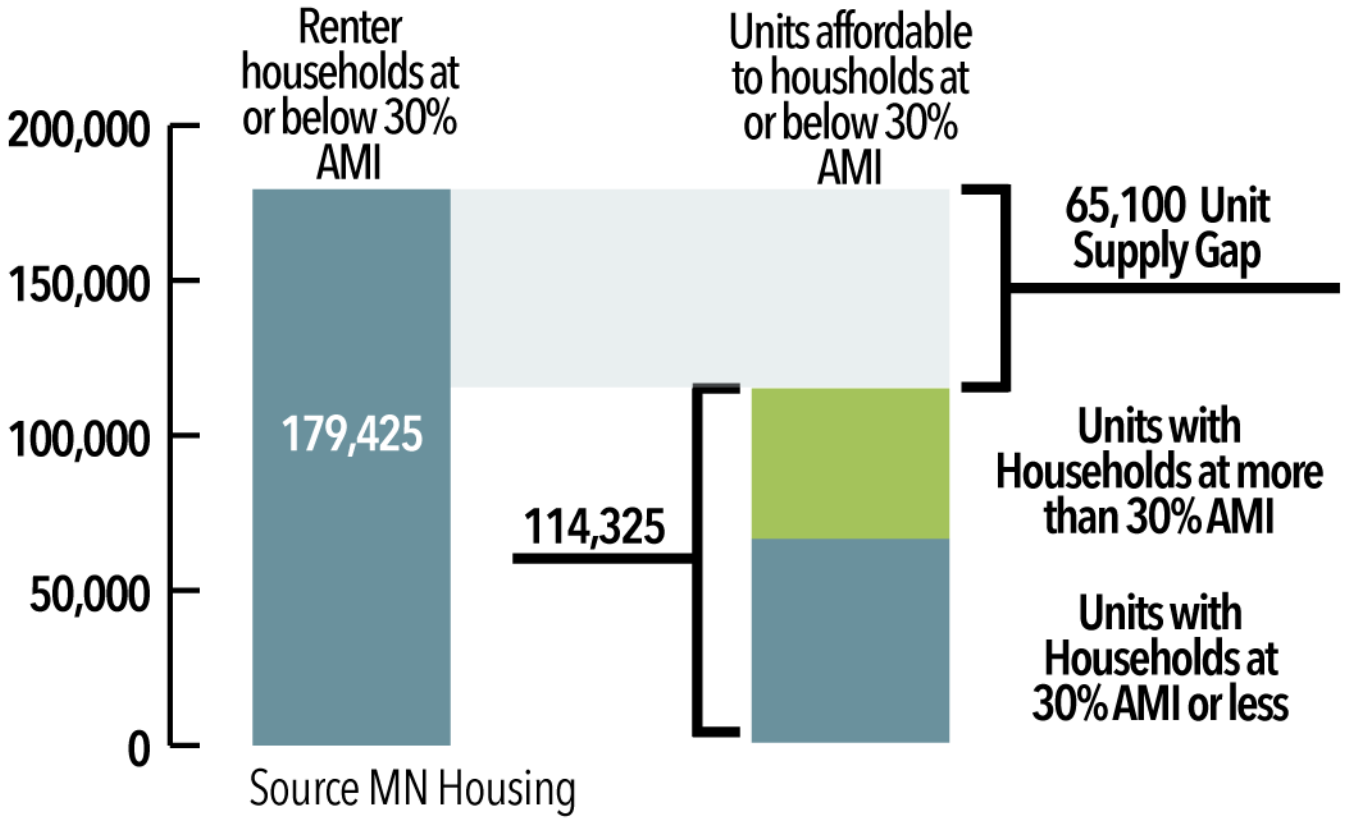


Total housing units produced annually in Minnesota. Source MN Housing

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Housing Supply Gap

The mismatch is greatest for households below 30% median income. Targeting resources to these households requires new tools and increased investment.



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Why federal housing advocacy?



Charles Obije

Lincoln Park Resource Center

Duluth, MN



Omar Nur

Somali Social Service Association

Rochester, MN

Community Stabilization Project

"Tenant Stability Leads to Community Stability"

Carolyn Brown

Community Stabilization Project

St. Paul, MN

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How to Be an Effective Advocate

Because your voice matters.



Michael Dahl

HOME Line

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To advocate you must know what you want.

Bridge the gap between income and rent.

- We want a $25 billion investment to expand rental assistance.
- This will help an estimated 300,000 households.

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To advocate you must know what you want.

Preserve and increase the supply of deeply affordable and accessible housing.

- We want a $15 billion investment in the national Housing Trust Fun.
- This will build or preserve more than 150,000 units of affordable, available, and accessible housing for people with the lowest incomes.

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We’re not asking for too much.

The need for extremely low-income households in Minnesota

169,585 Approx. # of extremely low income households

- 64,238 Approx. # of affordable & available units

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105,347 Approx. gap in units

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Why you should be an advocate:

- Your voice matters.

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Why you should be an advocate:

- Your voice matters.
- Elected officials are people too.

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Why you should be an advocate:

- Your voice matters.
- Elected officials are people too.
- You are not expected to be a policy expert.

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How to be an effective advocate:

Get face-to-face time with a congressional representative or staff.

- Think of it as a conversation. Don’t do all the talking.
  - Identify yourself and your connection to issue.
  - Provide an overview of the issue with two or three main points.
  - Include data, stories, and your own experiences where possible.
  - Ask a “yes” or “no” question.
  - Follow up.

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Role play!

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The takeaway:

- Congress is currently negotiating the Build Back Better Act, which could include more resources to address housing needs.
- Your voice matters.
- From your experience, you know that your community needs more affordable housing and rental assistance.
- Contact your federally-elected senators and representative ASAP.

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Reflection:

- Establish your expertise on affordable housing and/or housing insecurity issues.
- Illustrate the need for more rental assistance in your community.
- Share a story or issue that makes that need clear.
- The ask: **"Will you actively support a $25 billion investment in rental assistance in the Build Back Better Act?**

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