

Senior Housing Weekly

February 11, 2021

LeadingAge Housing Advisory Group Call. Join us on Monday, February 14, at 12:30 PM ET for our regular Housing Advisory Group call. We'll be joined by USAging to talk about role of Area Agencies on Aging, COVID relief, and USAging's work with the new HUD/HHS Housing and Services Resource Center. We'll also check in on news from HUD and the Hill. Any LeadingAge member can join the Housing Advisory Group or submit advance questions by emailing Linda (lcouch@leadingage.org) or Juliana (jbilowich@leadingage.org).

LeadingAge Update Calls next week (3:30 PM ET Monday and Wednesday). On **Monday, February 14**, LeadingAge member and clinical advisory group member, **Dr. Noah Marco**, Medical Director of the LA Jewish Home will talk about his community's efforts to keep COVID-19 out, dealing with surges, the impact of isolation on residents, and his organization's successful efforts to increase staff and resident booster rates. Mental health of residents and staff is top of mind for LeadingAge members. On **Wednesday, February 16**, we will welcome Johns Hopkins professor **Melissa deCardi Hladek** to talk about her recent research on how we are coping with COVID-19 and what we can do to help manage stress during these trying times. If you haven't registered for LeadingAge Update Calls, [you can do so here](#).

House Passes CR Through March 11. On February 9, the House passed its the third Continuing Resolution (CR) of fiscal year 2022. This latest CR must now be passed by the Senate and signed into law by February 18, when the current CR expires. The CR funds government programs absent regular FY22 appropriations bills but at FY21 levels. According to reports, House and Senate leadership are close to reaching a deal on overall spending for defense and nondefense programs, paving the way for the 12 individual spending bills to be completed by a new March 11 deadline. "We are very close to an agreement and I am eager to move this process forward. I have every expectation that we can finalize a framework in short order and then work together to fill in the details and enact an omnibus," House Committee on Appropriations Chair Rosa DeLauro (D-CT) said in a statement upon the CR's passage.

Bill Uses HHS Funds for HUD Resident Services. On February 4, Representative Peter Aguilar (D-CA) introduced the Affordable Housing Resident Services Act. The new bill would allow HHS to transfer up to \$300 million a year of new funding for the Social Services Block Grant (SSBG) and Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) to HUD. Under the bill, HUD would then distribute the up to \$300 million of SSBG/CSBG funding as grants to a variety of HUD and non-HUD housing providers for the provision of a long list of services to residents. A LeadingAge article on the new bill and the bill text are [here](#).

Letter Urges Human Needs Funding. On February 10, LeadingAge joined more than 350 other organizations in a letter urging Congress to pass a fiscal year 2022 appropriations bill in order to reverse years of stagnation and even cuts to programs covering a vast array of human needs. Continued flat funding in the face of growing needs would be irresponsibly harmful. Inadequate funding over the past decade has caused many human needs programs to lose ground. Whether serving health, education and

training, child welfare, nutrition, substance use disorders, housing or other needs, appropriated programs cannot meet today's demands with yesterday's inadequate funding," the letter says. The text of the letter, coordinated by the Coalition on Human Needs, was delivered to Congress today as well as the more than 350 signers can be found [here](#).

LeadingAge Identifies Six Strategies to Elevate Equity and Affordable Housing in new Federal Broadband Deployment. Last week, LeadingAge submitted comments to the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) to guide deployment of more than \$46 billion in new federal broadband infrastructure funds toward affordable housing serving older adults. Our comments centers around six strategies for elevating equitable access and affordable housing emphasis as the infrastructure funds roll out nationwide, including requiring or incentivizing whole property, wall-to-wall internet installation in federally-subsidized housing communities; preserving the right to neutral cabling at affordable senior properties to improve resident choice and end-user internet costs; measuring success by proving internet to both un- and underserved households; reducing barriers to internet access and adoption; and partnering with entities already established to work with marginalized communities. LeadingAge has also made customizable talking points available for similar advocacy with state broadband offices deploying the funds. More information is available [here](#).

Resource Center Session Features Housing and Services Partnerships. This week, the [Housing and Services Resource Center](#) (HSRC), coordinated by the Administration on Community Living and HUD, presented a call on Cross-Sector Partnerships to Expand Options for Affordable, Accessible Housing. The call highlighted efforts in the Toledo, OH area to expand options for older adults and people with disabilities to live in their communities with access to supportive services they may need. Specifically, the call discussed how the city of Toledo and its partners are helping older adults access HUD-assisted multifamily housing or access home modification support to live at home longer. The call featured a discussion among housing and services providers, including LeadingAge members.

LeadingAge Hosts Call on Insurance Rates in Affordable Housing. This week, LeadingAge hosted a discussion with affordable senior housing provider members and specialized insurance brokers to identify trends and strategies for navigating the insurance industry. The call featured a rich discussion on the challenges facing housing providers; increasingly, affordable senior housing providers find themselves with limited carrier options, strict HUD rules, tightly controlled budgets, and high but unique risk because of their specialty real estate setting. Notes from the call are available [here](#), including a review of potential operational and policy solutions to rising rates and reduced coverage. LeadingAge will plan a follow-up call for next quarter. Contact Juliana (jbilowich@leadingage.org) for more information or to get involved in this effort.

Slight recovery of staff in health care; not yet in long-term care. The [number of employees in "nursing and residential centers"](#) increased steadily since these numbers were first reported – until 2020, when the number began dropping precipitously; it has not turned around yet. For [employees in health care](#), the number dipped in 2020 and almost immediately began climbing back. These findings were released today by FRED – Federal Reserve Economic Data, an online resource and offshoot of the St. Louis Federal Reserve Bank. LeadingAge members already know what the "nursing and residential" graph looks like in real life, but the graphic confirms visually how the employment situation looks.