



Senior Housing Weekly

March 10, 2023

LeadingAge Affordable Housing Network Meeting on March 13. Join the LeadingAge Affordable Housing Member Network on Monday, March 13, from 12:30 – 1:30pm ET for our regular housing call. We'll check-in on affordable housing workforce issues, including hybrid work policies, masking and vaccine requirements, and more. We'll also review the President's budget proposal and how it impacts affordable housing programs. Lastly, we'll update members on Service Coordinator and Supportive Services Fee news from HUD. Participation in the Network is open to all members of LeadingAge; for details on joining the Network (and attending Monday's meeting) contact Juliana (JBilowich@leadingage.org) or Linda (LCouch@leadingage.org).

Upcoming LeadingAge Policy Update Calls. All calls are at 3:30pm ET. We are finalizing arrangements for **Monday, March 13**. Among other topics the call updates will cover our ongoing conversations with CDC and details on the President's proposed FY 2024 budget that have implications for aging services providers. On **Wednesday, March 15**, Dr. Natalie Festa, Clinical Fellow, Yale University School of Medicine, will join us to talk about her research on climate threats and emergency preparedness in nursing homes. You can also find previous call recordings [here](#). Note that to access recordings of the calls you need a LeadingAge password. Any staff member of any LeadingAge member organization can set up a password to access previous calls and other "members only" content.

President Releases 2024 Budget. On March 9 the White House released and sent to Congress its [FY 2024 budget](#) summary, accompanied by a series of fact sheets. Program and funding details will be released on Monday, March 13. The President's budget is never enacted as is by Congress, but it is considered a good indication of the Administration's vision and policy direction/priorities. The proposed budget preserves Medicare's solvency by raising taxes for high income individuals. Several provisions in the budget indicate support for aging services providers and the people who use aging services, such as increased funding for more HUD Section 202 homes and an expansion of funding for Medicaid home and community-based services. Elements appear to support expansion of HRSA training programs for certain aging services professionals. Some relevant highlights include:

- **Affordable Housing.** The budget request seeks to increase funding for key affordable housing programs, including new Section 202 Supportive Housing for the Elderly homes, new Project-Based Rental Assistance contracts via mandatory funding, new vouchers, and additional HOME funding compared to FY22 funding levels. The request also seeks to almost triple tax expenditures for the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit and makes improvements to this program, including addressing right of first refusal issues and reducing the private activity bond financing requirement from 50 to 25%. An article about the housing portion of the request is [here](#).
- **Home and Community-Based Services.** The President's budget includes an ongoing commitment to expanding home and community-based services by proposing an \$150 billion investment over 10 years with specific mention of supporting the workforce. We are pleased that the President is continuing his commitment to expanding access to these vital services which include home care, assisted living, adult day, and other vital services that allow those who choose to remain in the community. This proposal mirrors the Better Care

Better Jobs Act that was reintroduced in the House and Senate last month; take action to support the bill [here](#).

- **Nursing Homes.** The President requests \$566 million for the discretionary CMS Survey and Certification Program, nearly a 40 percent increase above enacted funding, for nursing homes and other facilities' health and safety inspection surveys. Although additional funding is allocated for survey and certification, there is no information included in the budget summary on additional funding for nursing homes to comply with survey requirements or for other uses. The budget summary also noted a robust agenda to "improve the safety and quality of nursing home care, including efforts to improve ownership transparency; address the backlog of complaint surveys and provide adequate funding to conduct nursing home inspections; increase the inspection of low-performing nursing homes via the special focus facilities program; and expand financial penalties for substandard facilities," but provided no additional information or budget marks for these activities.
- **Workforce.** The budget summary indicates an awareness of the healthcare workforce crisis and includes some anticipated requests for increases in some existing programs. Specifically, the President requests \$49.5 million more than the \$350 million enacted last year for nursing education programs. A similar increase is also included to expand Registered Apprenticeship opportunities. Family caregiver programs are targeted for relatively small increases.
- **Immigration.** The budget requests \$7.3 billion for the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) to help rebuild the Nation's refugee resettlement infrastructure and support the resettling of up to 125,000 refugees in 2024. Further, it includes a request for \$865 million for United States Citizenship and Immigration Services to process an increasing asylum caseload, reduce the historically high immigration benefit request backlog, support the Citizenship and Integration Grant Program, and improve refugee processing to advance the Administration's goal of admitting 125,000 refugees.
- **Department of Labor.** The President calls on Congress to require all employers to provide paid sick days. The proposed budget would provide resources to administer and support wage and benefit requirements, address the classification of independent contractors, and increase penalties for labor law violations. The budget would expand access to paid Family and Medical Leave through a program administered by the Social Security Administration.

HUD Publishes 2023 Annual Adjustment Factors. On March 9, HUD announced the Annual Adjustment Factors (AAFs) for 2023, which adjust rents for certain Section 8 housing assistance payment programs. HUD establishes the rent adjustment factors on the basis of Consumer Price Index (CPI) data relating to changes in residential rent and utility costs. AAFs are applied at the anniversary of certain Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) contracts; the amount that an owner is required to deposit to the Reserve for Replacement account is also adjusted annually by the most recently published AAF, at the HAP contract anniversary. The 2023 AAFs are effective March 9, 2023. More information is available [here](#).

Older Adults 50+ Are Half of Nation's Homeless Population. On March 8, the Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Subcommittee on Housing, Transportation, and Community Development held a hearing, "The Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness." Witnesses were Jeff Olivet, Executive Director, U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness, and Dr. Richard Cho, Senior Advisor for Housing and Services, HUD. Mr. Olivet called homelessness a "life-and-death public health crisis" and said that, over the course of a year more than 1.2 million people experience

homelessness. “Older Americans—who face the same rising housing costs as everyone else, but often with fixed incomes and rising health needs—are one of the fastest-growing groups of people experiencing homelessness. Single adults over 50 now make up half of the homeless population, and if nothing changes in the next 15 years, Harvard University estimates that an additional 2.4 million seniors in the U.S. will have no access to affordable housing. Further, adults who experience homelessness age faster than their housed peers, with elevated rates of serious, chronic, and often avoidable medical conditions, Mr. Olivet said. Dr. Cho testified that communities have housing intervention resources for every veteran experiencing homelessness; for families with children, communities have resources for only one of every three such families; for other individuals, communities only have housing interventions for one of every 7 individuals who need one. Watch the hearing [here](#).

HUD Urges Housing Providers to Limit Unnecessary Fees. In a March 8 open letter to housing providers and state and local leaders, HUD Secretary Marcia Fudge encouraged all rental housing providers, as well as the companies that provide leasing and property management services to providers and rental platforms, to adopt policies that promote fairness and transparency for renters. The letter also says HUD will work with the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, the Federal Housing Finance Agency, the Federal Trade Commission, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture to release best practices on the use of tenant screening reports and strongly encourage property owners to align with these best practices on the use of tenant screening reports. Read the letter [here](#).

LeadingAge Endorses Housing Bill. During a March 7 hearing of the Senate Committee on Finance, Committee Chair Ron Wyden announced his reintroduction of the Decent, Affordable, Safe Housing for All (DASH) Act, which LeadingAge has endorsed. “The nation’s housing crisis has been growing steadily for decades, and with every year that passes, more people struggle to keep a roof over their heads and more people wind up on the street. It’s long past time for federal policy to reflect the fact that housing is a human right,” Chair Wyden said. The bill would provide a voucher to everyone experiencing homelessness, would increase resources for the national Housing Trust Fund and the Low Income Housing Tax Credit program, while improving the housing credit program for extremely low income people and protecting nonprofit ownership and preservation of housing credit by replacing the housing credit’s right of first refusal with a purchase option for projects financed after the date of enactment, create a renter’s tax credit, and create a new middle-income tax credit for households with incomes between 60 and 100% of area median income, among other provisions. The text of the bill is [here](#).

USDA Multifamily: \$70M Section 515 Rural Rental Housing Subsequent Loans. USDA is making \$70 million in subsequent loan funding for providers with Section 515 Rural Rental Housing loans to complete, improve, repair, or make modifications to multifamily housing projects that currently have a Section 515 loan or loan commitment. The funding will be available through two application processes. First, applications received by April 30, 2023, will be reviewed for funding, with a priority placed on funding projects with identified loan purposes. Second, USDA will announce additional Section 515 subsequent loan funding in a Notice of Solicitation of Applications (NOSA) that will be published later this year. For applications received by April 30, 2023, priority consideration will be given to applications that address at least one of the following needs: repairs or modifications to address health and safety findings or violations previously identified and documented by an Agency or Agency-authorized inspection or a code-enforcement agency, including the Agency’s recently launched Multifamily Housing Physical Inspection Pilot Program (MPIPP); repairs or modifications to comply with accessibility requirements previously identified and documented by the Agency or an Agency-authorized inspector; loan requests associated with prepayment applications already in process and/or approved by the Agency to support preservation of the Section 515 portfolio under the requirements of 7 CFR 3560

Subpart N—Housing Preservation; transfer applications currently in process and/or approved by the Agency that require additional funding to address financing gaps and/or meet Agency underwriting requirement; and, loan requests to address financing gaps in previously approved or closed preservation transactions. The USDA RD MFH Production and Preservation Division will discuss the Section 515 Subsequent Loan program during a Webinar on March 23, 2023, from 2-3pm ET. Register for the webinar [here](#).

Funding for Housing Trust Fund Declines for 2023. Two large funds that support affordable housing, the Housing Trust Fund and the Capital Magnet Fund, receive their funding based on new business volume of the housing government sponsored enterprises, Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. The federal overseer of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, the Federal Housing Finance Agency, has announced 2023 allocations to these two funds based on 2022 business volume. As FHFA explains in its announcement, “Market conditions in 2022, including higher interest rates, reduced the Enterprises’ total new business purchases compared to the previous year.” As such, contributions from the GSEs to the two funds decreased from \$1.14 billion in 2022 to \$545 million in 2023 (with \$354 million for the HTF and \$191 million for the CMF). Read the announcement [here](#).

Maryland and Michigan Organizations: Thome Aging Well Program Grant Opportunity. This is a grant opportunity for nonprofit organizations serving older adults with low incomes in Michigan and Maryland looking to scale proven social services and other support. Proposals are due April 14, 2023. Grants will be awarded to organizations that either seek to scale supportive services and programs (e.g., social engagement, emotional well-being, skills training, and physical, mental and financial health) or modifications to the built environment (accessibility, minor home repair, and building safety). A total of up to \$6 million will be awarded, in grants from \$75,000 - \$300,000 depending on applicant needs and projected impact, to nonprofit organizations providing support to adults aged 55 or older with low incomes residing in the states of Maryland and Michigan. Grants funded through this program will have a duration of up to 24 months. More information is available [here](#).

COVID Test Kits Still Available for Aging Services Providers & Will Continue After May 11 End of PHE. Since February, LeadingAge providers across the continuum of care have been ordering free COVID-19 test kits from LeadingAge, through an arrangement with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. More information and the easy order form are located [here](#). LeadingAge Members have asked if tests will still be available after the end of the Public Health Emergency on May 11. The answer is YES. HHS and White House officials have clearly stated that arrangements related to tests, vaccines, and treatments are separate from the timing of the end of the PHE. A separate portal, arranged in coordination with LeadingAge, is available for HUD 202 providers, [here](#).