



Senior Housing Weekly

April 7, 2023

LeadingAge Housing Network Meeting on April 10. Join the LeadingAge Housing Network on Monday, April 10, from 12:30 – 1:30pm ET, for our regular housing call. We'll check-in on some legislation of note and HUD appropriations action on the Hill, discuss housing-related events at LeadingAge's 2023 Leadership Summit April 17 - 19, share experiences with hiring Occupancy Specialists, provide the latest on service coordinator funding, and review LeadingAge's next steps on HUD's NSPIRE scoring proposal. Participation in the Network is open to all members of LeadingAge; for details on joining the Network (and attending the Monday calls) contact Juliana (JBilowich@leadingage.org) or Linda (LCouch@leadingage.org).

Upcoming LeadingAge Policy Updates, 3:30pm ET Monday and Wednesday: Workforce, recruitment, pipelines, and business decision making about affiliations. On Monday, April 10, Emily Dieppa (she/her) Vice President of Workforce Innovations at PHI will join us to discuss effective recruitment strategies to build the workforce pipeline and to promote careers in aging. On Wednesday, April 12 Adam Berman, President and CEO of Legacy Lifecare will talk about the Legacy project. Its mission is to help small-to-mid-sized, values-driven senior care organizations navigate the complexities of modern healthcare through the provision of consulting, affiliation, and management services. You can also find previous call recordings of every 3:30 LeadingAge call [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.

41 Senators Urge Robust Section 202 Funding. On April 6, Senator Robert Menendez sent a letter in support of strong funding for HUD's Section 202 Supportive Housing for the Elderly program to Senate Appropriations Committee leadership. The letter garnered sign-ons from 41 Senators, the most ever to join this annual letter. "We respectfully request: full funding for contract renewals for the Section 202 Housing for the Elderly program and an additional \$600 million for capital advances and operating subsidies for new 202 homes to keep up with existing and increasing need," the letter says. "Section 202 provides a sensible and necessary approach to meeting our nation's growing affordable housing needs for seniors, and it is the only federally funded program expressly aimed at doing so. As HUD's most recent Worst Case Housing Needs Report finds, 2.24 million very low-income elderly households are paying more than 50 percent of their income in rent, an increase of 68% since 2009." LeadingAge advocates urged every Senate office to join the letter and is grateful for Senator Menendez's continued leadership in support of the Section 202 program. Read the letter [here](#).

LeadingAge Urges Guardrails on HUD's Proposed Section 8 Renewal Updates. In response to an Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking issued by HUD in March, LeadingAge called on HUD to prioritize preservation, streamlining, and quality housing principles in any updates to Project-Based Section 8 renewal regulations. HUD's proposal, which outlines a proposed streamlining and consolidation effort to align various programs under the agency's project-based Section 8 platform into a single renewal framework, would merge "old" and "new" regulatory requirements into one new contract. While LeadingAge generally supports streamlining efforts at HUD, LeadingAge submitted

comments urging HUD to expand and protect distributions for owners, including non-profits, as a preservation and reinvestment strategy. LeadingAge also called on HUD to emphasize tenant protections and to move forward with renewal framework changes in a way that limits disruptions to communities, owners, and residents. More information is available [here](#).

LeadingAge Hosts Discussion on NSPIRE Proposed Scoring Notice. Following [HUD’s NSPIRE Proposed Scoring Notice](#) published on March 28, LeadingAge hosted a call with members to analyze the proposal and discuss comments to HUD. During the members-only call, LeadingAge staff reviewed the proposed changes to REAC’s housing inspection scoring and developed feedback for HUD, including point caps, extended phased-in scoring, additional resources and trainings from HUD, and more. HUD is seeking public review and comment on the proposed NSPIRE physical inspection scoring and ranking methodology until April 27, 2023. Members can [review LeadingAge’s complete analysis of the Proposed Scoring Notice](#) (must be logged into your LeadingAge account to view) and send any additional feedback to Juliana (jbilowich@leadingage.org). LeadingAge will host additional calls and trainings on the new NSPIRE Scoring once finalized by HUD. In the meantime, members can log in and register for LeadingAge’s HUD Oversight and Compliance Workgroup [here](#).

Chapters on Section 202, Service Coordinators in Housing Guide. The National Low Income Housing Coalition has published its *2023 Advocates’ Guide to Housing and Community Development Policy*. The free online resource has chapters on a large range of federal housing programs and tools, such as the Consolidated Planning Process and Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing. Each chapter is authored by subject-area experts, including the chapter on the Section 202 Supportive Housing for the Elderly program authored by LeadingAge for the last several years. Read the *2023 Advocates’ Guide* [here](#).

HUD Case Study: City Donates Land to LeadingAge Member. HUD’s research office, the Office of Policy Development & Research, recently completed a case study on LeadingAge member Miremonte Apartments in Durango, Colorado. In 2020, Volunteers of America opened [Miremonte Apartments](#), a 53-unit apartment community, which consists of one- and two-bedroom apartments for older adults who are at least 55 years of age and have incomes between 30 and 50% of the area median income. PD&R found that Miremonte, made possible through a city land donation “that saved VOA hundreds of thousands of dollars in development costs,” allows older adults to live in the community with access to resources that include a medical complex within walking distance and a regional trail network connecting to parks and the downtown area. The project is in the “village-style neighborhood of Three Springs and serves as a catalyst for development and investment in the area,” PD&R found. “The project exemplifies how cities can use public land to guide investment that builds new services and amenities for the community. VOA is considering adding a 40-unit development on the remaining 1.5 acres adjacent to Miremonte. This second phase would adopt the same financing structure as the Miremonte project, with the city of Durango conveying the land to VOA for \$10,” the case study says. Read the [full case study](#) here.

Report Highlights Broadband Challenges, Opportunities in Affordable Housing. On April 3, Pew Charitable Trusts published an issue brief titled “[Broadband Challenges and Opportunities in Affordable Rental Housing](#).” The brief is based on interviews with affordable housing and digital equity experts – including LeadingAge’s Director of Housing Operations and Policy, Juliana Bilowich – and calls broadband a “critical service” for health, education, recreation, and well-being for Americans. The brief goes on to identify challenges in affordable housing broadband access, including a lack of wiring in older buildings, a legacy of housing discrimination, and a lack of targeted funding for property retrofits; Pew researchers then discuss the benefits of broadband access once those barriers are overcome by either individual

residents or properties at scale. The Pew brief concludes with considerations for policymakers, which LeadingAge strongly supports. More info about the brief is available [here](#).

HUD Announces Proposed Changes to Flood Risk Management Requirements. On April 3, HUD announces a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking to address flood risk management for projects receiving HUD assistance, financing, or insurance. HUD’s proposed rule requires that certain newly constructed or substantially improved structures receiving various kinds of federal financial assistance be elevated or otherwise floodproofed. HUD is hosting three live listening sessions for stakeholders to provide comments; HUD is also accepting written comments until May 23. More information about HUD’s proposal is available [here](#).

National Groups Urge Strong Senior Housing Funding. In a letter coordinated by LeadingAge, 39 national organizations urged House and Senate appropriators to fully fund housing renewals and expand the supply of affordable senior housing in HUD’s FY24 funding bill. “We urge Congress not to stray from its commitment for full and timely renewal funding for the 1.9 million older adult households currently assisted by HUD’s Project-Based Rental Assistance, Section 202 Supportive Housing for the Elderly, Public Housing, and Housing Choice Vouchers programs. Meeting funding needs for the uninterrupted provision of quality affordable housing for currently assisted residents is of utmost importance,” the March 31 letter says. “We urge Congress to expand the supply of housing affordable to older adults with very low incomes by providing \$600 million for new capital grants and operating subsidies for approximately 5,400 new Section 202 Supportive Housing for the Elderly homes.” Read the letter [here](#).

HUD Commemorates National Fair Housing Month of 2023. On April 4, HUD commemorated April as National Fair Housing Month and the 55th anniversary of the Fair Housing Act. HUD’s Fair Housing Month theme this year is “Choices for All Voices: Building an Equitable Future.” Each April, HUD, local communities, fair housing advocates, and fair housing organizations across the country recognize Fair Housing Month by hosting events that underscore the impact and significance of the Fair Housing Act. Throughout the month, HUD and its partners will host activities that enhance public awareness of fair housing rights, highlight fair housing enforcement efforts, and emphasize the importance of creating diverse and inclusive communities. More information is available [here](#).

Medicaid Advisory Group to Discuss HCBS, Duals, and Other Issues of Interest to LeadingAge Members. The Medicaid and CHIP Payment and Access Commission will host its April meeting on Thursday, April 13 and Friday, April 14. Interested individuals can register [here](#) for a zoom link to attend the meeting. The day and a half long [agenda](#) includes a few topics that will interest members of LeadingAge:

- Review of a chapter on beneficiaries who are dually eligible for Medicaid and Medicare for the June Report to Congress.
- An update on unwinding the continuous coverage requirements.
- Review of a chapter on Medicaid home and community-based services for the June Report to Congress.

White House Proclamation on Care Workers Recognition Month. On March 31, President Joe Biden, offered a White House Proclamation which proclaims April 2023 as Care Workers Recognition Month. Home care workers, long-term care workers and childcare workers are acknowledged for their extraordinary contributions as care workers. The President makes a commitment to support them with better pay and better benefits. Additionally, the proclamation highlights President Biden’s proposed FY

2024 Budget, which calls on Congress to invest \$150 billion over the next decade to improve and expand Medicaid home and community-based services, making it easier for seniors and people with disabilities to receive care in their own homes. Also, noting how this funding would improve the quality of jobs for home care workers and support family caregivers. Additionally, the proclamation promotes the use of apprenticeship programs and the importance of partnering with employers, unions, and others to recruit, train, and keep long-term care workers on the job while also helping them advance their careers as registered and licensed nurses. The “*White House Proclamation on Care Workers Recognition Month*” is available [here](#).