



Senior Housing Weekly

May 5, 2023

LeadingAge Housing Network Meeting on May 8. Join the LeadingAge Housing Network on Monday, May 8, 12:30 – 1:30pm ET, for our regular housing call. We'll start with a housing provider check-in and then review recent Fair Housing updates from HUD, including assistance animals, criminal background screening, Section 504 regs, and more. 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).

LeadingAge Policy Call, Monday, May 8, 3:30pm ET, join us as we chat with Jacob Berelowitz, Program Manager, Center of Excellence for Behavioral Health in Nursing Facilities. The Center specializes in four behavioral health topics (serious mental illness (SMI), substance use disorders (SUD), co-occurring disorders (COD), and serious emotional disturbance (SED)) that affect the quality of life for nursing home residents. Nursing homes can get free individual help and support from the Center. Other provider settings and services will find the Center's [web-based resources](#) and publications informative as well. Members and other interested individuals can sign up to join LeadingAge's Policy Update calls [here](#). 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.

Accessible Housing Bill Gets LeadingAge Support. On April 27, Senator Bob Casey (D-PA), Chair, Senate Special Committee on Aging, introduced the *Visitable Inclusive Tax Credits for Accessible Living (VITAL) Act* to address the housing affordability and accessibility crisis for people with disabilities. There is a severe dearth of accessible housing in the US. LeadingAge supports the bill. Read more about the bill in this [article](#).

Creation of Interagency Housing Council Supported by LeadingAge. LeadingAge has endorsed H.R.2974, which was introduced on April 27 by Representative Adam Schiff (D-CA). The bill would establish a Federal Interagency Council on Housing Affordability and Preservation. The Council would develop a National Strategic Plan to Preserve Affordable Housing, assess all federal housing programs, and provide technical assistance to state and local governments as well as housing providers to better coordinate federal housing activities, and conduct housing research. "With housing prices through the roof, we must find new and innovative ways to bring down the cost of housing and make it more affordable," Representative Schiff said in a tweet upon the bill's introduction. Read the bill [here](#).

LeadingAge Calls for Key Changes in NSPIRE Scoring Proposal. On April 27, LeadingAge submitted comments to HUD's Real Estate Assessment Center (REAC) calling for key changes to the agency's proposed new housing inspection scoring model. LeadingAge's comments emphasize the need for adjusted scoring designations and extended phased-in scoring for the new housing inspection protocol. The proposed approach to scoring would take effect for HUD-assisted Multifamily Housing providers with the launch of NSPIRE on October 1. More information is available [here](#).

States Receive \$382M from National Housing Trust Fund. On May 3, HUD allocated \$382 million to states for the production and operation of housing for households with extremely low incomes. The national Housing Trust Fund’s resources can be used by states for real property acquisition, site improvements and development hard costs, related soft costs, demolition, financing costs, relocation assistance, operating cost assistance for rental housing (up to 30% of each grant), and reasonable administrative and planning costs. The funds are often paired with other state-generated or state-controlled housing resources. Funding for the national Housing Trust Fund is not appropriated by Congress; rather, the “housing Government Sponsored Enterprises,” Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, contribute a percentage of their new business volume to the Housing Trust Fund. Because Fannie and Freddie business volume has slowed as the home buying and refinancing market has slowed, contributions to the Housing Trust Fund have decreased. In 2022, Fannie and Freddie contributed \$749 million to the Housing Trust Fund compared to \$382 million in 2023. See the new 2023 Housing Trust Fund state allocations [here](#) (this chart also includes fiscal year 2023 state allocations from HUD’s HOME and Community Development Block Grant programs). These [state offices](#) receive the national Housing Trust Funds and administer them for their states.

Americans of All Ages Are Increasingly Isolated – And What We Can Do to Increase Social Connection. Surgeon general Vivek Murthy issued an [Advisory on the Healing Effects of Social Connection and Community](#) on May 2. Official title: Our Epidemic of Loneliness and Isolation 2023. The Advisory does not include special focus on older adults, though it has sections that address people across the age span on health care systems and workers, health professionals, workplaces, and community-based organizations. The advisory outlines 6 pillars to advance social connection, related to: social infrastructure in local communities, public policies that support connection, mobilizing the health sector, reforming digital environments, deepening our knowledge, and cultivating a culture of connection.

ACL Announces New Funding to Improve Support for Family Caregivers. On May 1, the Administration for Community Living (ACL) [announced](#) \$20 million in new funding over 5 years for its first major initiative in support of the 2022 National Strategy to Support Family Caregivers. ACL will award five cooperative agreements for projects to foster advancements in two programs authorized by the Older Americans Act — the National Family Caregiver Support Program and the Native American Caregiver Support program. Each project will receive up to \$1.1 million annually for four years to develop, test, and disseminate new approaches to supporting family caregivers. A wide range of public and private organizations are eligible and encouraged to apply, and it creates an unprecedented opportunity for the aging and disability networks to build new partnerships with organizations in other fields that can help drive innovation in these areas. The initiative is in keeping with President Biden’s Executive Order on Increasing Access to High-Quality Care and Supporting Caregivers, signed April 18. Applications are due Monday, June 26, 2023. ACL will host an informational conference call to share more details regarding the grant announcement on this Thursday, May 4, 2023, at 2:00 PM ET; Call-in number: 800-779-3216, Passcode: 3818865#. Complete details and application instructions are posted on Grants.gov, available [here](#).

Join Letter to Oppose Funding Cuts. Join LeadingAge and hundreds of other national, state, and local organizations in a [letter](#) to House and Senate leadership to reject House plans to fund nondefense discretionary programs, like housing and workforce programs, at fiscal year 2022 levels in fiscal year 2024. The letter calls on Congress to reject proposed cuts to nondefense discretionary appropriations and “instead set funding for fiscal year 2024 at a level that recognizes both rising costs and the need for investment in programs important to fostering economic growth and meeting human needs.” Aging services stakeholders are urged to [sign onto the letter here](#) by the May 12 deadline.