

Spotlight On...

News Alert: Congress Passes Economic Recovery Act

Today, February 13, Congress passed HR 1, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. This legislation totals \$787 billion and is designed to stimulate the economy, create jobs, and help strengthen the safety net for Americans, including homeless Americans. The final version of bill contains a number of measures regarding housing and poverty, including:

- \$1.5 billion for short-term rental assistance, housing relocation, and stabilization services for families who may become homeless due to the economic crisis. Funds will be distributed to states, cities, and local governments through the Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG) formula;
- \$70 million for the Education for Homeless Youth and Children Program;
- \$100 million for the Emergency Food and Shelter program;
- \$4 billion for the Public Housing Capital Fund, to assist public housing authorities in rehabilitating and retrofitting public housing units, including increasing the energy efficiency of units and making critical safety repairs;
- \$2 billion for the Neighborhood Stabilization Program to assist states, local governments, and nonprofits in the purchase and rehabilitation of foreclosed, vacant properties in order to create more affordable housing and reduce neighborhood blight;
- \$250 million to support a program to upgrade HUD sponsored low-income housing to increase energy efficiency, including new insulation, windows, and furnaces;
- \$500 million for the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Children, and Infants (WIC);
- \$19.9 billion for additional Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly Food Stamps, to increase benefit levels by 13.6 percent;
- \$50 million under the Violence Against Women Prevention and Prosecution Programs for transitional housing assistance grants;
- \$1 billion for the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG);
- \$1 billion for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG);
- \$2 billion for full-year payments to landlords participating in the Section 8 Project-Based program;
- \$2.25 billion for the HOME Investment Partnerships Program;
- \$200 million to support direct and guaranteed single family housing loans under the Rural Housing Insurance Fund;
- \$510 million for Native American Housing Block Grants;
- Increase in unemployment benefits for 20 million workers by \$25 per week and a continuation of the extended unemployment benefits program (which provides up to 33 weeks of extended benefits) through December 2009;
- Creation of a capped, temporary Temporary Assistance For Needy Families (TANF) Contingency Fund through FY 2010 to provide states with relief during this recession;
- One-time payments of \$250 to Social Security beneficiaries, SSI recipients, and veterans receiving disability compensation and pension benefits from the VA;
- Temporary increase in the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) for working families with three or more children; and
- Extension of the moratorium on all 7 Medicaid regulations.

In the coming days, the Alliance will provide additional information on the implications of these funding measures.

The House passed the bill this afternoon, and the Senate passed it with 60 votes this evening. President Obama is expected to sign the legislation into law by Monday. [Full Conference Report](#)

ABOUT US

The National Alliance to End Homelessness is a nonpartisan, non profit organization dedicated to solving the problem of homelessness and preventing its continued growth.

www.endhomelessness.org

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