

Housing Choice Vouchers

Urge Congress to:

- Provide sufficient funds for FY11 to renew all vouchers in use in 2010.
- Enact the Section 8 Voucher Reform Act (SEVRA) to:
 - stabilize the voucher funding system
 - improve portability of vouchers
 - make HUD's Fair Market Rents more accurate
 - improve the inspection process
 - ensure affordability of rents while simplifying rent setting
 - encourage increased earned income in voucher, public housing and project-based Section 8 programs
- Fund at least 250,000 new vouchers in the FY11 HUD appropriations bill.

Background:

Voucher assistance covers the gap between what voucher holders can afford to pay for housing (30% of adjusted income) and what local, HUD-determined fair market rents are.

Funding must be appropriated in FY11 to renew all existing vouchers, about 2 million across the country. HUD has requested \$17.11 billion for voucher renewals in FY11. This amount is expected to be sufficient to renew all vouchers in use in 2010.

Congress has been working on Section 8 Voucher Reform Act legislation for a number of years. A House bill, H.R. 3045, sponsored by Representative Maxine Waters (D-CA), came out of committee in 2009 and could be voted on by the House as early as this month. A Senate bill is expected to be introduced. The legislation would bring many efficiencies and improvements to HUD's voucher program.

Enactment of the legislation could also increase the likelihood of achieving another housing goal: at least 250,000 new vouchers in FY11.

Congress has not appropriated funds for a significant number of new vouchers since FY01, when about 87,000 new vouchers were funded. Due to HUD mismanagement, the nation lost about 150,000 vouchers between 2004 and 2007.

Vouchers, which are targeted at extremely low income households, prevent homelessness and can also be project-based to make existing or new developments affordable to extremely low income people.