

MERCY HOUSING 2018 PUBLIC POLICY PRIORITIES

Mercy Housing is the voice of practitioners with over three decades of experience developing, financing, and managing affordable housing. The Mercy Advocacy Council (MAC) was instituted to spearhead our public policy & advocacy efforts to influence policy and regulatory direction related to safe, affordable rental apartments and how we impact poverty, health outcomes, workforce needs, veterans, and aging seniors in our communities. MAC consists of senior leaders from Mercy Housing and the Mercy Loan Fund. On regional, state, and national levels our combined efforts focus on five policy priorities.

- 1. ADVOCATE for HUD and USDA Rural Development funding.** These programs support millions of low-income families and we seek an increase in funding for beneficial regulatory and legislative changes to multifamily affordable housing and community development programs.
 - Build and sustain Mercy Housing's existing, subsidized housing portfolio – project-based Section 8 Rental Assistance, Section 202, HUD-VASH, RAD, McKinney Vento Homeless Assistance grants and USDA Rental Assistance.
 - Expand affordable housing opportunities through new construction and historic preservation programs such as CDBG, HOME, Choice Neighborhoods, and the National Housing Trust Fund.
 - Expand sufficiency programs such as the Family Self-Sufficiency program.

- 2. CHAMPION the Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC).** This has been a foundation for the nation's community development and affordable housing for over three decades - annually financing over 3 million affordable homes and creating and sustaining 140,000 jobs, while spurring millions of dollars in increased community income and tax revenues. LIHTC is a powerful means to crucial funding for Mercy Housing and our partners.
 - Advocate to preserve and enhance the national Low Income Housing Tax credit.
 - Advocate for Private Activity Bonds and Historic Tax Credits.

3. PIONEER affordable housing as a platform for improved health. Combining healthcare partnerships with preventative health and wellness programming reduces hospital visits, increases longevity, and improves quality of life.

- Support our healthcare partner's advocacy efforts to continue robust funding for Medicare and Medicaid.
- Replicate and expand the HUD enhanced service coordination evaluation pilot.
- Capitalize on our long history of partnerships with healthcare providers to deliver service enriched programming which is proving to improve low-income residents' health outcomes.
- Continue creating Community Health Facilities through Mercy Loan Fund to ensure that community-based care is accessible to all.

4. IMPROVE federal support for Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs). We advocate for more resources, participation and access, and improvements to CDFIs by partnering with CDFI Coalition and Opportunity Finance Network (OFN).

- Protect and expand funding for CDFI program.
- Support funding for the Capital Magnet Fund.
- Partner with OFN during appropriations collective advocacy efforts.

5. SUPPORT charitable giving through philanthropy and community partnerships. We actively engage with citizens, community leaders, and grassroots organizations to foster healthy communities. Donations support our resident programming – a key component of our mission and long-term commitment to positive impact.

- Protect and strengthen individuals' ability to support nonprofits and foundations to fulfill their mission driven goals.
- Advocate for policies that encourage Americans to contribute to the charitable causes of their choice by: providing tax deductions for their gifts; tax incentives for volunteer service; remove tax obstacles for charitable gifts to maximize giving from private foundations.

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