

National Affordable Housing Trust Fund Act, S 2523: Talking Points

Over the last twenty years a decline in the supply of affordable housing has been a root cause of widespread homelessness and has led to a disproportionate amount of households paying over half of their income on housing costs.

- ❖ People who become homeless are the very poorest people typically making about \$400 a month.¹ They struggle with paying their rent and remaining adequately housed.
- ❖ Currently there is not a single Congressional district with enough rental housing that is affordable to extremely low-income households, those making 30 percent or below of area median income.²
- ❖ However, this has not always been the case. In 1970, there was a surplus of 300,000 affordable housing units available to low-income households and as a result there was not widespread homelessness.³ People still had similar issues to deal with such as poor health and mental illness but they could find an affordable place to live.
- ❖ Nationwide, 71 percent of extremely low-income renter households spend more than half of their incomes for housing.⁴

The National Housing Trust Fund Act, S 2523 is a powerful federal response to the nation's housing affordability crisis.

- ❖ S 2523 would establish an ongoing, permanent, dedicated source of funding to provide states and local communities with resources to build, preserve, and rehabilitate housing for people with extremely low incomes.
- ❖ The goal of the Trust Fund is to create 1.5 million units over 10 years.
- ❖ A National Housing Trust Fund will complement the more than 600 successful state and local housing trust funds that have been created across the country.

S 2523 will prevent and end homelessness.

- ❖ The bill requires that at least 75 percent of the monies serve people below 30 percent of area median income, and at least 30 percent would have to serve households whose income, like the majority of people who are homeless, qualify them for Supplemental Security Income (SSI).
- ❖ The majority of the people who enter the homeless system have experienced some sort of crisis that causes them to lose their housing because of the added burden from paying a so much of their income for rent.
- ❖ The bill will create the first federal housing program that produces housing for the poorest households and it requires that Trust Fund-assisted developments remain affordable for at least 50 years.

¹ Homelessness: Programs and the People They Serve: Findings of the National Survey of Homeless Assistance Providers and Clients: Summary. December 1999. Interagency Council on the Homeless.

² National Low Income Housing Coalition (NLIHC). 2006. *Out of Reach*.

³ Daskal, Jennifer. "In Search of Shelter: The Growing Shortage of Affordable Rental Housing." June 1998. Paper.

⁴ NLIHC. 2006.