Utah Housing Matters Conference
Marriott Park City Sidewinder
Park City, Utah
Tuesday, Wednesday - August 27th & 28th

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Save the Date
Utah Housing Matters Conference
August 27 & 28th
Park City Marriott
August 26
Golf Tournament

Fair Housing Forum
October 1, 2019
Veridian Event Center
Registration coming soon

Spring Issue:
- Updates from the Coalition
- Members in Moab
- Member Spotlight: Epicenter
- Updates from the Commission on Housing Affordability
- National Poll Data
- Federal Policy Updates
Homeless Youth

Over the summer, the Utah Housing Coalition worked with homeless youth to identify barriers in accessing housing and education. UHC, in partnership with Synchrony Bank brought 91 homeless youth to the hill in December where they expressed the need for access to shelter.

We worked on HB371 which allows homeless youth who are under the age of 18 consent for shelter so they can get off the streets and into services. It also allows homeless youth to access a fee waiver for State ID cards and vital records. This bill is a great step toward addressing the needs of Utah’s growing population of youth experiencing homelessness.

2019 Gap Report

Recent data from the National Low Income Housing Coalition’s Gap Report shows that the affordable housing crisis remains a problem in Utah.

Affordable, decent, and accessible housing is of critical importance to our well-being, providing a stable foundation for child and parental health, childhood cognitive development, educational achievement, and employment. Utah’s growing housing gap continues to be a challenge for a fast-growing economy. Along with strengthening state and local resources, we must increase federal resources to fill the growing gap of affordable housing.

Access the full 2019 Gap Report here.
Thank you to all of our members who were able to join us for a great meeting in Moab! A special thank you to Community Rebuilds for hosting us and helping us get our hands dirty! We look forward to seeing you all in Logan on August 7, 2019.

Members volunteering with Community Rebuilds and Straw Bale Homes

Thanks to Moab & Mayor Niehaus for hosting the Housing Coalition!

Thank you to all of the elected officials that joined us for this event
Epicenter recently hosted their first ever housing open house at their headquarters in Green River. Over the past ten years Epicenter has developed a single family housing prototype (The Frontier House), made over 50 home repairs through their award winning critical home repair program (Fix It First), assessed the entire housing stock of Green River and co-created an award winning housing plan with the City. This recent open house marks the next phase of Epicenter’s housing Program; a development to be co-designed and created alongside the community of Green River.

The open house was simultaneously an information session and a community-driven design charrette. Epicenter shared a timeline of housing work since 2009, new mission statement and long term goals, and a recent housing assessment update. The design portion included asking residents about their current housing situation (ie. “What do you love about your current house?”) and asking them to help Epicenter begin designing new housing for Green River residents (ie. “What housing typology would you prefer: duplex, row house, townhome, or apartment?”).

Epicenter staff mingled with attendees throughout the event and had great conversations on the possibilities of mixed-use development (and what that looks like in a rural setting), their favorite houses in town (and why), and much more. There were even activities for the kids who attended, and these exercises were not just ways to keep kids entertained; the kids to drew their dream homes (no rules!) and staff members asked the kids about what they drew and why. Free food, games, and music were also critical to the event’s success. Twenty-nine residents were in attendance throughout the event including town leaders Mayor Travis Bacon, City Council members Kim Andrus and Kathy Ryan, and City Manager Conae Black.
In the days after the open house, Epicenter’s Community Coordinator Annalee Howland took the open house on the road for those who were unable to attend (mostly due to work obligations). She visited local businesses, focusing mostly on back-of-house workers, to go over the open house items and questions. Twenty-three local residents, with a focus on those currently living in mobile homes, were also surveyed after the event asking the same questions.

The event was also an opportunity for residents to meet Epicenter’s newest staff member, Lindsey Briceno, a licensed architect and Enterprise Architectural Rose Fellow. Back in 2017, Epicenter was selected to host a two-year (January 2019 - December 2020) Rose Fellow by Enterprise Community Partners, a national non-profit that improves communities and people’s lives by making well-designed homes affordable. During her time in rural Utah, Briceno will focus on developing housing solutions for rural Utahns with a focus on Green River residents.

The next step for Epicenter include, assessing the data, conversations, and information graciously provided by local residents to form an action plan for creating new affordable homes in Green River, hopefully a product that can be replicated throughout the rural West. Epicenter is also forming a local housing advisory committee to dive deep into co-designing housing with Epicenter.

To learn more about Epicenter and the work they are doing in Green River visit [http://ruralandproud.org/](http://ruralandproud.org/).

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info@ruralandproud.org
Utah’s Commission on Housing Affordability

Utah’s Commission on Housing Affordability was created during the 2018 Legislative Session through HB430. The Utah Housing Coalition worked with Representative Becky Edwards and Senator Jake Anderegg to create this critical commission.

The 5 year commission on housing affordability has been charged with an important task: finding solutions to Utah’s quickly growing affordable housing gap.

The commission is comprised of 20 members who represent a diverse group of stakeholders (see sidebar). There are also 7 subgroups which are focused on various aspects of the challenges of building affordable housing. SB34 was the first piece of legislation run by the commission. “This is a marathon, not a sprint”, Senator Anderegg reminds the public in a legislative press conference, “SB34 is not a magic bullet, we have 4.5 years to work on identifying good solutions”.

Looking to the next four years, the commission is committed to finding lasting solutions which address preserving and building affordable housing. We are excited to work with the commission to find solutions to this growing challenge.

Addressing affordable housing with SB34

In 2019, Utah’s Commission on Housing Affordability worked on SB34 which requires cities to use certain planning tools in their moderate income housing plans. This legislation builds off of past planning bills and requires cities to be in compliance with moderate income housing plans in order to be eligible for TIF or TIFF funding. If cities want state transportation dollars, then cities must comply with moderate income housing requirements.

In order to build more affordable housing units, SB34 requested a one-time $20 million appropriation and additional $4 million of ongoing yearly funding.

While no money was allocated to affordable housing, the policy portion of SB34 was passed and we are confident that this is a an important step. It ensures that as Utah’s rapidly growing communities are planned, affordable housing will be part of that conversation. As the Legislature moves into a discussion on tax modernization, the commission will work to identify a dedicated source of funding for affordable housing. Increased funding will allow the private sector to partner with the state and build or preserve the affordable housing that Utahns need to thrive.

We know that a stable, affordable home improves all aspects of our lives. Finding solutions to the affordable housing crisis is not only critical to Utah’s growth, but our children’s educational success, living healthy lives, and building a strong sense of community.
Federal Policy Updates

One thing that many of the 2020 presidential candidates share, is a commitment to addressing the growing affordable housing gap. This is especially important when reviewing the data collected by the National Poll conducted by the Opportunity Starts at Home Campaign which shows that American’s across the nation are concerned about the lack of affordable housing, and many people feel that this should be a central issue in the 2020 elections.

The following policy proposals have been put forth in the Congress and Senate to address affordable housing. We are committed to keeping members updated on federal policy and the federal budget.

**American Housing and Economic Mobility Act** - Senator Warren (D-MA) and Reps. Richmond (D-LA), Cummings (D-MD), Lee (D-CA), and Moore (D-WI). If enacted, this ambitious proposal would help end housing poverty and homelessness in America by directly addressing the underlying cause of the affordable housing crisis – the severe shortage of affordable rental homes for people with the lowest incomes – through a robust investment of nearly $45 billion annually in the National Housing Trust Fund. The bill also includes resources to repair public housing, build or rehabilitate housing in Native American and Native Hawaiian communities, and create and preserve affordable homes in rural areas. For more information, see NLIHC’s factsheet on the AHEM Act.

**Rent Relief Act** - Senators Harris (D-CA), Feinstein (D-CA), Blumenthal (D-CT), and Hassan (D-NH) and Rep. Scott Peters (D-CA). The bill creates a new, refundable tax credit to cost-burdened households, making it possible for millions of the lowest-income people to afford to keep roofs over their heads. To learn more, see NLIHC’s chart comparing the renter credit proposals.

**Housing, Opportunity, Mobility, and Equity (HOME) Act** - Senator Booker (D-NJ) and Rep. Clyburn (D-SC). The bill creates a new, refundable tax credit to eliminate housing cost burdens for millions of the lowest-income people and incentivizes local communities to address regulatory and zoning barriers that restrict supply and drive up housing costs. To learn more, see NLIHC’s chart comparing the renter credit proposals.

**HUD Budget**
The President’s office has released their HUD budget and once again we see massive cuts to CDBG, HOME, Self-Help and Vouchers for Veterans and Tribes. A review from the CFPB shows that 85% of the HUD budget goes toward rental assistance, with the rest going to grant programs that support community development. Without a complete HUD budget, those with the highest need will lose their housing support.

**ACTION ITEM:** Please contact your federal officials and urge them to pass a budget that keeps HUD whole. To see the proposed HUD budget from the President’s office, [click here](#).

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85% of HUD Budget Goes for Rental Assistance

- Rental assistance programs (e.g., housing vouchers, public housing): $41.1 bil.
- Community development programs (e.g., CDBG): $3.3 bil.
- Other housing programs (e.g., HOME, Native American grants): $2.1 bil.
- HUD management & administration, IT: $1.7 bil.

Note: HUD = Department of Housing and Urban Development. Figures are average funding levels in House and Senate 2017 HUD funding bills.
Source: CBPP analysis

CENTER ON BUDGET AND POLICY PRIORITIES | CBPP.ORG
The Opportunity Starts at Home campaign commissioned a national public opinion poll through Hart Research Associates to assess the public’s opinions and perspectives on issues related to housing affordability. The poll surveyed 1,201 adults nationwide between February 25 - March 4, 2019. Over the past year, nearly 100 multi-sector organizations have joined together through Opportunity Starts at Home, an unprecedented campaign to advocate for stronger federal housing policies. Stakeholders from many different sectors are increasingly recognizing the importance of affordable housing to their own priorities and goals, and through the campaign, powerful new partners are working shoulder-to-shoulder to broaden the housing movement.

Some findings of the poll include:

- 91% of people in the United States say stable affordable housing is very important or one of the most important things that affect people’s security and well-being in the United States.

- 76% believe that, compared with previous generations, it is harder today for people to find stable housing they can afford.

- 73% say housing affordability is a problem in the area where they live, with 60% saying it is a serious problem – up 21 points from 2016.

The Opportunity Starts at Home poll is the first in several years to thoroughly assess the extent to which the American people consider housing affordability to be a problem in their communities; whether they have had to make trade-offs in other areas of their lives because of costly rents/mortgages; whether they expect action from elected officials; whether they are more likely to vote for a candidate that has a detailed plan to address the problem; and how open they are to the specific policy solutions outlined in the campaign’s policy agenda. The poll will inform policymakers about how the public views the issue of housing affordability and specific policy solutions.
# Utah’s Federal Delegation

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<tr>
<th>Senator Mike Lee</th>
<th>Senator Mitt Romney</th>
<th>Congressman Chris Stewart - CD2</th>
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<td>285 W Tabernacle, Suite 200</td>
<td>The Mobile Office is for constituents who might not otherwise be able to meet with staff at offices in Salt Lake City and St. George. Mobile Office schedule is available at: <a href="http://www.lee.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/mobile-office">http://www.lee.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/mobile-office</a></td>
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<td>Utah Housing Coalition</td>
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