

# REPEAL THE FAIRCLOTH AMENDMENT

The U.S. Government has been providing affordable, permanent housing for over 1.8 million families through public housing. Public housing serves a critical role in the nation's rental market, providing stable, affordable homes for households with low incomes.

**Almost 2 million families who live in public housing include some of the nation's most disadvantaged citizens, including elders, people with disabilities, toddlers, infants, and their working class parents.**

Not to be confused with other housing subsidy programs, public housing is housing stock that is owned by HUD (U.S. Government) and administered by local Public Housing Authorities (PHAs). Public housing comes in all sizes and types, from scattered single-family houses to high rise apartments for elderly families.

## In 1998

through the Faircloth Amendment, the U.S. Government created an artificial barrier by limiting the number of public housing units that federal authorities could build and has resulted in many people being left without a home. This amendment prevents any net increase in public housing stock from the number of units as of October 1, 1999.

Simply put, the Faircloth Amendment sets a cap on the number of units any public housing authority (PHA) could own and operate, effectively halting new construction of public housing. This prevents policymakers from using a vital tool, building more permanent affordable housing, to address our nation's growing housing and homelessness crisis.

**In the two decades since the Faircloth Amendment passed, rent costs have skyrocketed while average incomes have not.**

The median inflation-adjusted rent has increased 13.0 percent since 2001, while the median inflation-adjusted renter's income has only increased 0.5 percent during that same period.

This obstacle in creating more affordable housing that the amendment created, is happening while there is a \$70 billion backlog in funding for maintenance and repairs to existing public housing stock.

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## Support and Co-Sponsor Repeal the Faircloth Amendment Act

Support and Co-Sponsor Repeal the Faircloth Amendment Act which would overturn the 1998 law, so there would no longer be a federal limit on creation of new public housing. It was introduced in the House as [H.R. 659](#), by Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-NY14), and co-sponsored by Rep. Carolyn Maloney [D-NY-12] and Rep. Earl Blumenauer [D-OR-3], which would repeal the Faircloth Amendment, releasing the ban on the construction of new public housing in the United States.

- Repealing the Faircloth Amendment would not only eliminate a physical ban that has barred access to affordable housing for more than twenty years, but it would also allow for communities, tenants and PHAs to reimagine how building more public housing with permanent affordability could create opportunities for seniors to rest and families to thrive.
- Intentionally designing and planning to have public housing integrated in the community where residents thrive in their neighborhoods, where they have access to opportunity, where there's jobs, resources and public parks can be accomplished, but first Faircloth must be repealed.
- While few funds are currently dedicated toward new public housing construction, lifting the prohibition from the Faircloth Amendment lays the groundwork for a net increase in the supply of public housing, a crucial step in increased aggregate housing supply.
- It is not an either fully fund current public housing OR repeal the Faircloth Amendment to create new public housing, it is an AND. Repeal the Faircloth Amendment to remove the barrier to create new public housing AND fully fund PHAs to properly maintain safe, decent, accessible, and affordable housing units that they currently hold.

Congress should uncuff itself from the restraints that the Faircloth Amendment has put on this country's ability to create affordable housing. Public housing is critical to addressing the nation's poverty crisis. As a long-term asset, public housing provides decent housing to the nation's most vulnerable citizens, connects low-income workers to economic opportunities, and spurs regional job creation and economic growth.

## About National Coalition for the Homeless

The National Coalition for the Homeless is a national network of people who are currently experiencing or who have experienced homelessness, activists and advocates, community-based and faith-based service providers, and others committed to a single mission: To end and prevent homelessness while ensuring the immediate needs of those experiencing homelessness are met and their civil rights are respected and protected.

Contact NCH with questions on Repeal the Faircloth Amendment: Donald Whitehead, Executive Director, [dwhitehead@nationalhomeless.org](mailto:dwhitehead@nationalhomeless.org).