

Quarterly Review Newsletter

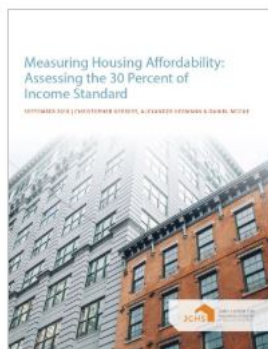
FLORIDA NON-PROFIT HOUSING, INC.



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Measuring Housing Affordability

The Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University released an informative working paper entitled - Measuring Housing Affordability: Assessing the 30 Percent of Income Standard.

“The 30-percent of income standard is a widely used and accepted measure of the extent of housing affordability problems across the country. While simple and easy to implement, the measure is not perfect. The limitations of the 30-percent standard have long been recognized: its rigid uniformity



amidst a diverse and ever-changing array of affordability challenges raises questions about its validity over time and across markets and household types. This paper examines whether an alternative measure, based on the concept of residual income, produces a different assessment of the extent and incidence of housing affordability challenges. In the end, this paper finds that, compared to the residual income measure, the 30-percent standard tends to overstate housing affordability challenges for high-cost markets and for higher-income and smaller households but yields similar results regarding overall levels of affordability. Thus, given the simplicity of the 30-percent standard, it remains a reliable indicator of affordability both over time and across markets. Caution, however, should be used in using this measure assess affordability challenges among different income levels or household types as variations in the cost of other necessities would suggest the need for corresponding variations in the payment standard used.”

To read the report in its entirety use the following link: <http://www.jchs.harvard.edu/research-areas/working-papers/measuring-housing-affordability-assessing-30-percent-income-standard>. (Courtesy of www.jchs.harvard.edu)

NATIONAL RURAL HOUSING COALITION

Are you a member of the National Rural Housing Coalition (NRHC)? Did you know that the NRHC:

- Analyzes federal policies and programs considering the need for better housing and community facilities in rural America;
- Works with Members of Congress and federal agencies to design new programs to serve the rural poor and improve existing ones;
- Advocates for adequate funding for rural housing programs; and
- Supports non-profit organizations that operates rural housing and community development programs.

Visit the NRHC at www.ruralhousingcoalition.org or follow them on  @RuralCoalition or on  [@Facebook.com/NationalRuralHousingCoalition](https://www.facebook.com/NationalRuralHousingCoalition) and join TODAY! New members will receive a special rate. If you were a member, but forgot to pay your dues, it's okay! Contact NRHC today (202) 393-5229.

News & Notes

Congress passes Farm Bill. House and Senate conferees reached an agreement on a new five-year Farm Bill, dropping provisions that would have imposed stricter work requirements on food stamp recipients. The Senate passed it on December 11 and the House on December 12. President Trump is expected to sign it into law. The bill requires USDA to have an Under Secretary for Rural Development and requires the appointee be confirmed by the Senate. The Under-Secretary position had been eliminated in a 2017 reorganization, replaced by an Assistant to the Secretary for Rural Development. Anne Hazlett has served in that role since June 2017. The bill also maintains local eligibility for USDA rural housing programs after the 2020 Census, so long as a place's population does not exceed 35,000 and it remains "rural in character." The bill authorizes a new Rural Innovation Stronger Economy (RISE) grant program, a concept HAC supported, to create rural job accelerators and related programming. HAC and others suggested additional improvements to the bill's Rural Development title, but in general the 2018 RD title is much like the 2014 version.

Increased staff specialization planned for USDA Rural Development. At the 2018 HAC Rural Housing Conference, RD officials explained some staffing changes, which are also described in letters from Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue to members of the House and Senate Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittees. An October 10 letter says that applications for the Section 538 rental guarantee program and Section 515 rental loan program will no longer be processed or underwritten in each state office. Twenty-five staff, who will remain in their current state office locations, will work exclusively on either 538 or 515. According to a November 30 letter, instead of handling the Section 502 guaranteed program in each of the 47 state offices, the agency will create a single unit, so the program will be delivered by 275 employees rather than 300. In addition, appraisers, architects, engineers, and others will be "realigned" into the RD Business Center. The November letter says that affected staff will remain in their current locations and implies that unneeded staff will be reassigned rather than laid off. The November letter enumerates other

changes being made in the RUS, RBS, and Community Facilities staffs, and additional changes are described in the HAC News, 11/30/18.

Mark Calabria named to lead Federal Housing Finance Agency. President Trump will nominate Calabria, currently chief economist for Vice President Mike Pence, to serve a five-year term as director of FHFA, which regulates Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac, and the Federal Home Loan Bank system. The term of Melvin Watt, the current director, ends in January. FHFA director nominees must be confirmed by the Senate.

Executive Order encourages development in Opportunity Zones. On December 12, President Trump signed an order creating a White House Opportunity and Revitalization Council, to be comprised of 13 federal agencies and chaired by HUD Secretary Ben Carson. The council is charged with targeting existing federal programs to "urban and economically distressed areas," including Opportunity Zones, and to engage with all levels of government on revitalizing low-income communities. A list and map of all Opportunity Zones are available on the CDFI Fund's website. A supportive statement issued by Anne Hazlett, USDA Assistant to the Secretary for Rural Development, says "USDA Rural Development programs will award priority points on applications from private sector intermediaries for projects built in opportunity zone census tracts as well as in other select programs for projects that directly benefit communities located in Opportunity Zones."

HAC's Rural Voices magazine covers capacity building. The conference issue of Rural Voices describes what it means to build the capacity of rural housing organizations, why it is important, who does it, how it is done and how it is financed.

Census Bureau releases new data for counties, towns, Native lands and more. The newest American Community Survey data has been released on the Census Bureau's American Fact Finder website. This five-year data provides estimates of demographic characteristics, income, housing, education and other subjects for states, counties, and smaller areas such as zip codes, census tracts, and American Indian Areas/Alaska Native

Areas/Hawaiian Home Lands. For the first time, broadband-related data is included.

Study examines trust lands and manufactured homes in Indian Country. The Center for Indian Country Development at the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis has released new research, reported in a blog post titled "Race, Location, and Manufactured-Home Loans on American Indian Reservations." They examine the statistically higher rate of loan applications at the intersection of manufactured housing, American Indian identity, and reservation trust. Much of this research was shared at the 2018 HAC Rural Housing Conference session "Homeownership in Indian Country – Creating the Opportunity for Choice."

Happy holidays from HAC! The board and staff of the Housing Assistance Council wish peace, prosperity and affordable housing to all! HAC's offices will be closed from December 24 to January 1.

Need capital for your affordable housing project? HAC's loan funds provide low interest rate loans to support single- and multifamily affordable housing projects for low-income rural residents throughout the U.S. and territories. Capital is available for all types of affordable and mixed-income housing projects, including preservation, farmworker, senior and veteran housing. HAC loan funds can be used for pre-development, site acquisition, site development and construction / rehabilitation. Contact HAC's loan fund staff at hacloandfund@ruralhome.org, 202-842-8600.

(More News & Notes is provided courtesy of HAC NEWS, December 14, 2018, Vol. 47, No. 25 and located at: <http://www.ruralhome.org/sct-information/hac-news/1632-hac-news-december-14-2018>)

CONTINUING RESOLUTION!

Congress has executed a Continuing Resolution (CR) to fund the government at current levels from December 22, 2018 to February 8, 2019.

Florida Non-Profit Housing, Inc.
P.O. Box 1987 / 3909 Kenilworth Blvd
Sebring, Florida 33871
Tel: 863.385.2519 // <http://www.fnph.org>

NOTE: As of 1/1/19, FNPH will no longer be using the Earthlink email address. Visit our website for staff email addresses.



CONGRATS & GOOD LUCK!!



Homes In Partnership, Inc. (HIP) located in Eustis, Florida has been awarded a new grant in the amount of \$300,000. HIP will assist 12 families build new homes in Hernando and Marion Counties, Florida.

Esther Stewart Buford Foundation (ESBF) in Yazoo City, Mississippi has closed a new grant. The new grant is in the amount of \$418,950 and will aid ESBF in providing services to 15 families in Yazoo County, Mississippi.

Housing Assistance Corporation (HAC) based in Hendersonville, North Carolina has closed another grant in the amount of \$382,320. HAC efforts will support 12 families in the construction of new homes in Henderson County, North Carolina.

Mountain Housing Opportunities, Inc. (MHO) located in Asheville, North Carolina has been awarded a grant for \$383,000. MHO plans to assist 12 families to build their homes in Buncombe County.

Mountain Projects, Inc. (MPI) based in Waynesville, North Carolina has been awarded a new grant. The grant, in the amount of \$400,000, will allow MPI to help 11 families become homeowners.

North Carolina Indian Housing Authority (NCIHA) in Fayetteville, North Carolina has closed their new grant for \$350,000. NCIHA will assist 8 families build homes in Cumberland, Hoke and Robeson Counties, North Carolina.

SELF-HELP SPOTLIGHT

Take advantage of the Self-Help Spotlight. Efforts continue to provide current information in a user-friendly format.

Visit the Spotlight at <https://www.selfhelphousingspotlight.org>. Update your agency's information, visit other grantee's profile and take the opportunity to network and share ideas. The Spotlight now has a SSL certificate to ensure that the site remains secure. Please note that the URL now begins with "https:" instead of "http:". The "s" symbolizes that the site is secure. This is primarily to encrypt information sent over the website, such as a contact form. However, the biggest benefit for all grantees is that the site should now rank higher in search results. The website now has a Google Translate button. This bright orange translate button is at the bottom corner of the site. The button translates all text between English and Spanish.



HOLIDAY SEARCH-A-WORD



B E L L S Q D R E I D E L J P	Bells	Happy
W H I E A H A M I R A C L E R	Candy canes	Family
R A G R N T Y T O Y S U I L E	Cards	Kwanzaa
A N H P T A S R D C A R D S S	Christmas	Lights
P U T F A G D E H A J K L D E	Cookies	Menorah
P K S N O W R E Z N P X C A N	Dancing	Miracle
I K E E C V U B N D I C M N T	Decorations	New year
N A G W F A M I L Y E H C C S	Dolls	Pie
G H G Y M N B V C C X R O I Z	Dreidel	Presents
P L N E D E C O R A T I O N S	Drum	Santa
A K O A H A P P Y N A S K G D	Eggnog	Snow
P S G R P O E L V E S T I I O	Elves	Tag
E M E N O R A H U S Y M E T L	Fruits	Toys
R R E W Q F R U I T S A S Q L	Ham	Tree
K W A N Z A A T Y U R S E W S	Hanukkah	Wrapping paper

HAC CONFERENCE

The Housing Assistance Council recently held their biennial conference on December 4th – 7th in Washington, D.C. Sessions were held on Self-Help Construction, 502 Loan Packaging issues, Rehabilitation, Native American housing issues, Social Health, RD funding technical assistance, critical coordination of rural development, as well as farmworker related housing issues. The networking opportunities proved beneficial for many of the participants.

David Lipsetz, HAC's Executive Director, led the Building Rural Communities: Honoring the Past, Maintaining the Mission, & Creating a Stronger Vision General Session. Moises Loiza and Joe Beldon, former HAC Executives. They both received standing ovations as they were announced.



The Awards Banquet was held on Wednesday, December 5th. The 2018 winner of the Cochran/Collings Award is Starry Krueger. The 2018 winners of the Skip Jason Award are Joe Myer, Salvador Estrada, Cassie Hicks and Dennis Lalor. Congratulations and thank you for your hard work and dedication.

The conference was a great success, well-organized, and enjoyed by all attendees. Job well done to HAC and Staff for a successful conference!

SUCCESS STORIES

FNPH continues to be interested in our grantees contributing stories regarding the success of the families in your programs. We are certain all grantees are proud of the families they work with and we would like to spotlight them for all to see. Please submit your stories of the journey to homeownership of one, two, or a few of your families, a photo and authorization to FNPH. For more information or a submission, please email Tara Rogers: trogers@fnph.org.

10 Ways to Winterize on a Budget

Taking simple, inexpensive steps can help keep your cost down through the winter months and help save you money. Here are several ways to assist you in doing both.

- ✓ **Clean Your Gutters** - Making sure that water can flow freely through your gutters now will help prevent icicles and ice dams from forming later. **Cost: Other than your sweat and time, free.**
- ✓ **Flush the Water Heater** - Particles and sediment can collect over time in the bottom of your water heater, hindering the unit's efficiency. Flush the water through the drain valve to clear out the material and keep your heater functioning at its best. **Cost: 100% free, if you do it yourself!**
- ✓ **Clockwise Ceiling Fans** - Have your ceiling fans move in a clockwise direction so they push hot air along the ceiling towards the floor. If they're going counterclockwise, they won't be as effective. **Cost: free, if you have a fan.**
- ✓ **Window Insulation Film** - Window insulation film can keep up to 70% of heat from leaking out of the windows. You won't mind the appearance when you're toasty warm in your house! **Cost: \$5 to \$15 per kit.**
- ✓ **Draft Guards** - In a drafty room, heat escapes under the door. When winterizing your house, place draft guards by the doors to prevent heat loss. It's a simple solution that keeps your house warm and saves you from wasting energy. **Cost: \$10 to \$20 or free, if you place a rolled towel at the bottom of the door.**
- ✓ **Replace Filters** - Regularly changing the filters in your central air and heating system can significantly improve its efficiency and longevity, while easing the pressure on your wallet. **Cost: \$20 to \$35 for a pack of filters.**
- ✓ **Weather-strip Tape** - Drafts and air leaks increase your heating costs, so make sure your windows and doors are sealed tight with weather-stripping. Simple, easy, and smart. **Cost: \$5 to \$10 per roll.**
- ✓ **Fiberglass Insulation** - For maximum heat retention, pack fiberglass insulation around basement doors, windows in unused rooms, and window AC units. Make sure your attic floor is insulated, too. Just remember to be careful and wear gloves! **Cost: around \$25 per roll.**
- ✓ **Programmable Thermostat** - Install a programmable thermostat now and save money by keeping the temp down when you're not at home. **Cost: prices vary from basic versions for around \$35 to \$60 to smart-home options in the \$100 to \$200 range.**
- ✓ **Just Caulk It** - Any remaining gaps in siding, windows, or doors can be filled with caulk. For extra drafty windows and doors, caulk the inside too, pulling off moldings to fill all gaps in the insulation. **Cost: \$10 for a caulk gun and caulk.**

Courtesy of: www.paradigmresidentialinspections.com/11-ways-to-winterize-your-home-on-a-budget/