



## Wisconsin Affordable Housing Network Newsletter

January 2023

### Wisconsin Affordable Housing Action Network Updates

The Wisconsin Affordable Housing Action Network (WAHAN) is dedicated to transforming the debate around permanent affordable housing in Wisconsin. Working together we can support local communities in innovation to meet affordable housing needs impacting the most vulnerable, families, and our workforce in ways that strengthen communities and provide a template for others to follow. We can do this while advocating at State and Federal levels as opportunities allow us to move the needle to maximize impact.

At WISCAP, the Wisconsin Community Action Program Association, we believe Housing is a Human Right. We prioritize customized high-quality supportive services so people can thrive.

### January Sub Committee Meetings

In lieu of a general meeting in January, we decided to break into 4 subcommittees. The meetings, while mostly introductory, helped craft expectations and set goals for each focus area. The recordings are below. In case you forget we will be having our monthly general meeting this Thursday, February, 2nd.

**-Affordable Rental Housing** - Recording (rT&ru=y9). The next meeting will be held via Zoom here.

**-Affordable Homeownership** – Recording (40hzt@nu). The next meeting will be February 21st at 11am via Zoom.

**-Technical Assistance: Housing Development, Financing, and Zoning Advocacy** - Recording (password). The next meeting will be on Zoom link here.

**-Innovation in Housing Strategies** - Recording (48.G?sV\$). 2nd Meeting The next meeting will be on Feb. 23rd at 11am Zoom link here.

This is just the beginning! The discussion and actions that come about from these meetings will guide our actions as a whole. It's not too late to join a sub-committee. If you are interested in joining one please sign-up here and email the respective chair.

### Join NLIHC's Housing Policy Forum and Make Your Voice Heard on Capitol Hill!

The National Low Income Housing Coalition (NLIHC), a partner of the Wisconsin Affordable Housing Action Network, is dedicated to achieving racially and socially equitable public policy that ensures renters with the lowest incomes have quality homes that are accessible and affordable in communities of their choice. NLIHC's upcoming **Housing Policy Forum: Onward to Housing Justice** will be held from March 21-23 in Washington, DC. The Policy Forum will conclude with Capitol Hill Day, which offers a powerful opportunity to connect with legislative offices and advocate for affordable housing policy priorities. In the face of emerging threats to

housing and homelessness programs, it is critical that Wisconsin advocates make their voices heard in support of vital federal resources!

**What's at stake:** With a newly divided government in the 118<sup>th</sup> Congress, housing and homelessness programs may be at risk of harmful budget cuts. House Speaker Kevin McCarthy (R-CA) vowed to cap federal funding at Fiscal Year 2022 (FY22) spending levels, which would cut HUD's budget by more than \$8 billion. Speaker McCarthy has signaled that he will require spending cuts in exchange for lifting the debt ceiling—the legal limit on the amount of money that the US government can borrow to fulfill its financial obligations. According to the Treasury Department's forecasts, Congress must take action on the debt ceiling by early June to avoid defaulting on its debt, which would have catastrophic effects on the national and global economies. The looming standoff over the debt ceiling will increase the risk of across-the-board spending cuts and austere spending caps. In 2011, House Republicans made a similar effort to lift the debt ceiling in exchange for deep spending cuts. The result was 10 years of low spending caps on domestic priorities, including housing and homelessness programs, that made it impossible for Congress to fund proven solutions at the scale needed to address America's affordable housing crisis.

**Opportunities for action:** NLIHC's upcoming [Housing Policy Forum: Onward to Housing Justice](#) will provide the latest updates on federal housing policy from members of Congress and leaders in the Biden-Harris Administration, feature some of the country's most prominent leaders in the movement for racial and economic justice, and strengthen the nationwide network of affordable housing advocates. The Forum will empower participants to advocate for their priorities on Capitol Hill Day and to employ new strategies in their state and local advocacy. In addition to pushing back against proposed budget cuts, Hill Day participants will also build momentum for bold housing policy solutions that meet the scale of the need—including a major expansion of Housing Choice Vouchers and the establishment of a permanent emergency rental assistance program. To educate lawmakers and strengthen their support for housing resources, it is critical that constituents share their stories about the impact of the affordable housing crisis in their communities and in their own lives.

Further details and registration for the Policy Forum can be found [here](#). Please reach out to Courtney Cooperman, NLIHC housing advocacy organizer, at [ccooperman@nlihc.org](mailto:ccooperman@nlihc.org) with questions.

## New Name Competition

WAHAN...we need to talk. While we all should be proud of what we've started in the past few months, there has been an ever-growing elephant in the room: our name. The acronym WAHAN is good for shortening the very wordy Wisconsin Affordable Housing Advocacy Network but doesn't quite roll off the tongue. According to some, it has a certain phonic similarity to a certain city in China.

Regardless, let's have a little fun and come up with a new name for ourselves. Submissions can be sent to [mfields@wiscap.org](mailto:mfields@wiscap.org). We plan to vote on these at the General Meeting on March 2nd. The winner will get all the respect of the network and in the near distant future when the works of this group have put an end to the housing crisis and eradicated homelessness, you will be remembered for your contribution!