



NOAAH *Prime*

Affordable and Fair Housing in America: Summer 2025 Edition



THE NATIONAL ORGANIZATION OF
AFRICAN AMERICANS IN HOUSING

NOAAH

Summer 2025

28 Years
Of Affordable
Housing Advocacy

Juneteenth, 2025

On June 19, 1865, more than two years after the Emancipation Proclamation was issued, federal troops arrived in Galveston, Texas to enforce the freedom of over 250,000 enslaved African Americans still held in captivity. This day—now known as Juneteenth—marks a pivotal moment in American history, symbolizing the delayed but powerful triumph of liberation.



Juneteenth is one of the oldest African American holidays, with celebrations dating back to 1866. It has been recognized as a day of remembrance, resilience, and rejoicing, becoming a federal holiday in 2021.

As we commemorate Juneteenth, we must also acknowledge current policies and practices that feed into systemic racism, perpetuating discrimination and barriers to affordable and accessible housing, disproportionately affecting Black and brown communities. Access to safe, stable, and affordable housing is a fundamental human right, yet millions of Americans face housing insecurity, displacement, and homelessness.

Juneteenth is not only a celebration of freedom—it is a call to action. It reminds us that true liberation includes economic justice, housing equity, and the right to live with dignity. Advancing housing and homelessness solutions is essential to achieving racial justice.

As we gather for feasts, music, and community traditions, let us also recommit ourselves to the work of justice. Let Juneteenth inspire us to build a future where freedom is not delayed, and where every individual has the opportunity to thrive—starting with a place to call home.

Washington Update: A Bad Ugly Bill



U.S. White House

President Donald Trump and HUD Secretary Scott Turner released on May 30 the remaining details of their full fiscal year (FY) 2026 [budget request](#). As indicated in the [partial](#) request released on May 2, the full budget request proposes a historic 44% cut to HUD's vital affordable housing, homelessness, and community development programs, and would impose changes to rental and homelessness assistance that would leave more families struggling to afford rent, and at increased risk of homelessness.

The president's budget request is a step in the annual appropriations process and represents the President and his administration's priorities – only Congress has the power to allocate federal funding, and ultimately it will be up to members of Congress to decide how to fund HUD's vital affordable housing and homelessness assistance programs in the coming fiscal year.

Appropriators in Congress have already begun drafting spending bills for FY26. House Appropriations Committee Chair Tom Cole (R-OK) released the anticipated schedule for Appropriations subcommittees and the full committee to review and debate their 12 annual spending bills, a process known as “markup.” The House Transportation, Housing and Urban Development (THUD) Appropriations Subcommittee is slated to markup their draft FY26 spending bill for HUD programs on [July 14](#), with a full Appropriations Committee markup scheduled for [July 17](#). The Senate Appropriations Committee has not yet announced the markup schedule for their draft FY26 spending bills, but Senate Appropriations Vice Chair Patty Murray (D-WA) released a [statement](#) in response to the President's budget request, noting the request would “eviscerate” HUD funding and “rip the roofs off Americans' heads and put even more families at risk of homelessness.”

The need for additional funding for the Emergency Housing Voucher program

In addition to the need for increased funding in FY26 to cover the cost of renewals for HUD's Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program, Congress will need to provide funding to ensure the 60,000 households who receive an Emergency Housing Voucher (EHV) do not lose their assistance. The [EHV program](#) was created in the *American Rescue Plan Act of 2021*, which provided \$5 billion for 60,000 new tenant-based rental assistance vouchers specifically targeted to people experiencing or at immediate risk of homelessness, including people escaping intimate partner violence. The EHV program



U.S. Congress

mandates that public housing authorities (PHAs), which are responsible for administering the program, work with their local Continuums of Care (CoCs) to identify people and families at risk of or experiencing homelessness and connect them to an EHV, and wrap-around services when needed for long-term housing stability.

The EHV program has been extremely successful, helping almost 60,000 people and families – and in particular families with children – find and maintain stable housing. While funding for the program was originally slated to last

until 2030, the rapid increase in the cost of rent over the last four years has caused funding to run out much more quickly than expected. Unless additional funding is allocated by Congress, HUD estimates that funding for the program will likely be depleted in 2026.

Renee M. Willis Named President and CEO of the National Low Income Housing Coalition



Renee M. Willis,
President,
NLIHC

Washington, D.C. – The Board of Directors of the National Low Income Housing Coalition (NLIHC) is proud to announce the appointment of Renee M. Willis as the organization’s new President and Chief Executive Officer, effective immediately. This historic appointment makes Willis the first Black woman to lead the Coalition in its 51-year history.

“On behalf of the NLIHC Board of Directors, I am proud to welcome Renee Willis as the next President and CEO of the National Low Income Housing Coalition,” said NLIHC Board Chair Dr. Bambi Hayes-Brown. “Renee brings a deep commitment to housing justice, a proven track record in advancing racial equity, and a powerful vision for ensuring that all people—especially those with the

lowest incomes—have a safe, affordable place to call home. Her leadership, compassion, and policy expertise are exactly what this moment demands, and we are excited for the future of NLIHC under her guidance.”

Following the departure of NLIHC’s previous president and CEO, its Board of Directors partnered with BoardWalk Consulting to launch a nationwide search for the organization’s next permanent president and CEO. The selection process was completed with the appointment of Willis.

Willis brings nearly a decade of leadership and commitment to NLIHC’s mission, having joined the organization in 2015 as Vice President for Field and Communications. She later served as Senior Vice President for Racial Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, before being named Interim President and CEO in January 2025.

“I am so grateful to the Board for entrusting me with this opportunity to lead NLIHC into its next chapter,” said Renee Willis. “It is both an honor and a responsibility I do not take lightly — especially as the first Black woman to serve as President and CEO of this vital organization. I carry with me the legacy and values of my grandparents, who came from the proud and resilient lineage of sharecroppers in rural Virginia. They taught me the value of dignity, community, and justice — values that ground my work every day.”

Renee has over 30 years of experience in affordable housing, including establishing and leading successful community and region-wide initiatives. She has extensive experience in strategic planning, financial management, marketing, organizational development, staff management, and program operations. Renee previously served as housing services chief with Arlington County, Virginia, as administrator of the Office of Landlord-Tenant

Affairs for Montgomery County, Maryland, and as advocate and manager for the Public Justice Center's Tenant Advocacy Project. Renee earned dual BA degrees in English and Spanish from the University of Maryland. She also holds a Certificate in Public Management from George Washington University.

Throughout her tenure, Willis has led with strategic vision, deep collaboration, and an unshakable commitment to centering people with lived experience in the fight for housing justice.

“At our core, NLIHC will continue to lead with excellence — grounded in our people, our data, and our policy,” said Willis. “We will defend and advance the housing programs that millions rely on, and we will do so with clarity and courage. But we will also unlock our untapped power — reimagining our work by using narrative and culture as catalysts for systemic change. I look forward to working alongside our incredible staff, our Board of Directors, our tenant leaders, state and tribal partners, and all our national, state, and local allies. Together, we will continue to push for bold and lasting solutions to the housing crisis.”



CHFA On the Move



Greg Brown, Business Development Specialist at Colorado Housing and Finance Authority.

In a recent statement Greg Brown of CHFA was quoted saying “The Black Homeownership Series is designed to empower our community with the knowledge and tools needed to navigate the homebuying journey with confidence. Part II will focus on practical steps to prepare for homeownership and build a personalized plan for success. Whether you're just starting or picking up where you left off, we welcome you to join us in person or virtually as we continue the path toward generational wealth through homeownership”

Part II of Building Legacy: A Black Homeownership Series will be held Saturday, June 28th at Noon at the Center for African American Health in Denver. The event will focus on introducing the steps to homeownership and how to plan a homebuying journey. Each event will build upon the previous one, but attendance is not required at all events. Participants can join the event series at any point. In-person and virtual registration options are available via the link below.

https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/ev/reg/g8gkxue?source_id=7fcd5cd4-7844-44dc-8282-446aa0cf6090&source_type=em&c=

NOAAH Prime Profile: Greg Nesbit



Gregg Nesbit, Owner
The Nesbitt Commercial Group

Building upon more than 30 years of experience as a real estate and business attorney and 15 years as a commercial broker in the Metro Denver residential and commercial real estate market, Eric Nesbitt, Esq. is catalyzing his expertise to support access to affordable real estate and spur neighborhood revitalization.

Nesbitt earned his Law Degree and Master of Business Administration from the University of California in Los Angeles. He also holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Finance from the University of Illinois. Since 1991, he has represented numerous residential and commercial clients, including the Wells Fargo Bank, the Regional Transit Authority, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, the City and County of Denver, Urban Land Conservancy, and many others on complex real estate and business matters.

Mr. Nesbitt is equally adept as an entrepreneur and is also the owner of The Nesbitt Commercial Group, a real estate firm. Combining these two spheres of expertise offers a comprehensive view of real estate matters to his clients.

Nesbitt's previous experience includes serving as General Counsel and Director of Business Affairs for USA Basketball of the United States Olympic Committee. He is currently a board member of the Colorado Bar Association's (CBA) Continuing Legal Education organization and a member of its Real Estate Section. He was a past president of the Denver Metropolitan Commercial Association of Realtors (DMCAR). He is also the former treasurer of the CBA's Solo and Small Firm Committee and recipient of numerous awards including being named as one of 5280 Magazine Denver's Top Real Estate Lawyers in 2022.

In Memorial



Rep. Charles Bernard Rangel
June 11, 1930 – May 26, 2025

Charles Bernard Rangel was an American politician who served as U.S. representative for districts in New York City for 46 years. A member of the Democratic Party, he was the second-longest serving incumbent member of the House of Representatives at the time of his retirement in 2017, having served continuously since 1971, and the ninth-longest serving in history. As its most senior member, he was also the Dean of New York's congressional delegation. Rangel was the first African American chair of the influential House Ways and Means Committee. He was also a founding member of the Congressional Black Caucus.

Rangel was part of the House–Senate joint conference that worked on the Tax Reform Act of 1986, a simplifying overhaul that constituted the most sweeping reform of the U.S. tax code in 50 years. In the negotiations Rangel successfully argued for dropping more lower-income people from the tax rolls; the elimination of six million households from federal income taxation was hailed as a wise policy by both liberal and conservative groups. Rangel authored the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit portion of the bill, which increased affordable housing in the U.S.

Rangel died at Harlem Hospital Center on May 26, 2025, Memorial Day, at the age of 94. He had been living in the Lenox Terrace apartment complex in Harlem at the time of his passing.

Charles Rangel was a key architect in the formation of NOAAH. Albeit behind the scenes, he was as a powerful ally and legislative supporter of NOAAH first ten years of legislative activity.

Charlie was a personal friend of NOAAH.

NOAAH Prime Summer Special Feature: A Day in Denver History: Lincoln Hills

African American campers and their counselor swim in South Boulder Creek in Camp Nizhoni, Lincoln Hills

Just in time for Juneteenth, History Colorado opened its updated exhibit on Lincoln Hills, one of the country's first mountain resorts for the Black community. The refreshed exhibit features six new oral histories told by visitors of the former resort, as well as photographs and keepsakes. Here's a primer on the outdoor vacation spot's unique story:



Hot Fun in the Summertime, Lincoln Hills
(Gilpin County), Colorado 1934

How the Resort Came To Be

The Lincoln Hills Country Club first opened in 1922 as a haven for Black people looking to recreate and vacation in the mountains during a time when many resorts were segregated and only allowed white patrons. The outdoor retreat is located along the South Boulder River near Pinecliff and Rollinsville.

In 1925, Obrey Wendell "Winks" Hamlet and William Pitts began

building the country club out, constructing the Winks Lodge and several cabins, which would later house celebrities and activists like Duke Ellington, Lena Horne, Zora Neale Hurston, and Langston Hughes.

From the early 1920s to 1945, the resort was also home to an all-girls summer camp called Camp Nizhoni.

The Lincoln Hills of Today

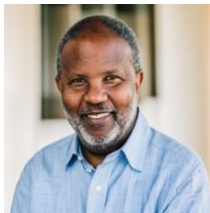
Though the Lincoln Hills Country Club closed in 1965, local nonprofit Lincoln Hills Cares still carries on the legacy by hosting outdoor education and

recreation programs for youth and families, particularly those in Denver's underserved neighborhoods.

Today, the land is owned by Colorado businessmen and philanthropists Robert Smith and Matthew Burkett, who are founders of Lincoln Hills Cares and the Lincoln Hills Fly Fishing Club, an invite-only recreational club separate from the nonprofit.

In 2023, U.S. Secretary of Interior Deb Haaland designated the Winks Panorama Lodge a National Historic Landmark. The effort to restore and preserve the lodge is ongoing.

Editor's Note: Lincoln Hills was the summer playground for Rosemary Berry, the mother of Les Berry, where she made many wonderful memories. Lincoln Hill is a source of pride for African Americans who were denied access to white-only mountain resorts.



Les Berry is a fourth generation Denver native and is the Editor of NOAAH *Prime*. He is retired from the City & County of Denver with 20 years of IT management experience, as well as political experience with the Denver Metro Chamber of Commerce. He currently serves as the Executive Assistant at Shorter Community AME Church.



Kevin Emanuel Marchman is the publisher of NOAAH *Prime* and a former U.S. Assistant Secretary of HUD and former Executive Director of the Denver Housing Authority. He currently serves as the Chairman of the Stapleton Development Corporation Board of Directors.

"Living Globally, Thinking Nationally, Acting Locally"