

## Federal Public Housing and Affordable Housing Bills Introduced in the US Congress

April 30, 2021

The following three public housing bills were introduced in Congress in April.

- [Green New Deal for Public Housing Act](#)
  - Introduced on April 19, 2021, by Senator Bernie Sanders (D-VT) and Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-NY).
  - Creates two new nationwide grant programs aimed at:
    - Prioritizing deep energy retrofits, recycling, energy efficiency, building electrification, community renewable energy generation, and water quality upgrades;
    - Providing well-paying job opportunities for public housing residents; and
    - Climate adaptation and emergency disaster response.
  - Funds tenant protection vouchers for displaced public housing residents.
  - Invests up to \$172 billion in green retrofits nationwide.
  - Creates up to 240,00 jobs across the country.
  - Reduces national annual carbon emissions by approximately 5.6 million metric tons, national public housing water bills by approximately \$97 million, and national public housing energy bills by approximately \$613 million.
  - Repeals the Faircloth Amendment, which currently limits the construction of new public housing developments.
  - Expands Public Housing resident councils so that public housing residents can be involved in making decisions regarding their own communities.
  
- [H.R. 2638 - Public Housing Fire Safety Act](#)
  - Introduced on April 16, 2021, by Representatives Bonnie Watson Coleman (D-NJ) and John Rutherford (R-FL).
    - A Senate companion bill ([S.265](#)) was introduced in February by Senators Tina Smith (D-MN) and Amy Klobuchar (D-MN).
  - Creates a national grant program at Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) that allows public housing agencies to install automatic sprinkler systems.
  
- [S. 1136/H.R. 2573 - Affordable Housing Credit Improvement Act of 2021](#)
  - Introduced on April 15, 2021, by Senators Maria Cantwell (D-WA), Todd Young (R-IN), Ron Wyden (D-OR), and Rob Portman (R-OH) and Representatives Suzan DelBene (D-WA), Jackie Walorski (R-IN), Don Beyer (D-VA), and Brad Wenstrup (R-OH).
  - Expands Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC), spurring the construction of affordable housing across the country and preserving existing affordable housing units.

- Advances several updates to the LIHTC program intended to strengthen and expand the program so that the affordable rental housing stock is increased across the country. These changes include:
  - Providing flexibility for existing tenants' income eligibility;
  - Limiting tenant-based voucher payments to rent charged so that more vouchers are available to other families; and
  - Aligning the program with the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) to ensure that victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking have clear protections under the program.

Additionally, on April 12, 2021, Representative Maxine Waters (D-CA), as chair of the House Financial Services Committee, released a draft version of the *Housing is Infrastructure Act of 2021*, which can be found [here](#). The proposed bill has not yet been introduced in Congress. The bill includes:

- \$70 billion nationwide investment to repair public housing; is estimated to create 770,000 jobs across the country;
- \$45 billion to be allocated to the national Housing Trust Fund so that new affordable homes could be built;
- \$5 billion allocated nationwide to address lead and other unsafe housing conditions; and
- Repeal of the Faircloth Amendment, which currently limits the construction of new public housing developments.