



AIA
New York

AIA New York Position Statement: Housing

Section 8, created by the Housing and Community Development Act of 1978, provides rental subsidies to approximately 4.8 million low-income households nationwide.¹ The New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) is the largest public housing agency in the nation, housing over 400,000 people in 328 public housing developments across the City. NYCHA residents and Section 8 voucher holders combined occupy 11.9 percent of the City's rental apartments, comprising 7 percent of New York City's population.² Federal funding administered through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) plays a critical role in the creation and preservation of affordable housing in New York City.

It is incumbent on the federal government to acknowledge the primacy of the nation's public housing system and take steps to ensure its survival. Lack of affordable housing disproportionately affects the most vulnerable members of our society, including children, the elderly, veterans, and the homeless, and has proven to have pervasive negative long-term socioeconomic consequences.

At the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA), about \$2 billion of the \$3.2-billion annual operating budget comes from federal funds, while another \$318 million in capital funds the agency spent in 2016 is from federal dollars.³ Over several decades, systemic reductions in federal funding have severely burdened the system to the point of near insolvency. If NYCHA's decline were to accelerate, it would have dire effects on the city's shortage of low-income apartments and homeless shelter space.

The American Institute of Architects

AIA New York
536 LaGuardia Place
New York, NY 10012

T (212) 683 0023

F (212) 696 5022

www.aiany.org

Principles

- The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development is fundamentally important to the country's well-being and AIANY supports its mission as it currently stands.
- Decent housing should be viewed as a vital part of the nation's infrastructure, a resource requiring the same level of government concern and investment as roads and bridges.
- Housing policy should be considered within a holistic vision of community building, alongside education, health awareness, and workforce training. It should also be considered within the comprehensive context of local and regional planning, including infrastructure expansion, transportation needs, and long-term sustainability.
- When the private marketplace cannot adequately address basic housing needs, the government has an obligation to ensure decent housing for all.
- The federal government has an obligation to combat institutional bias inherent in past policies that denied African Americans and other minorities an equal opportunity for homeownership and the corresponding wealth accumulation that comes with it. In this regard, we support the Fair Housing Act of 1968 and the recent effort by HUD (through the Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing Rule) to repair the law's unfulfilled promise.



- Housing policy can positively impact the environment by promoting energy-efficient new construction and retrofitting of the existing building stock.

The American Institute of Architects

AIA New York
536 LaGuardia Place
New York, NY 10012

T (212) 683 0023
F (212) 696 5022

www.aiany.org

¹ Housing Spotlight (2012), National Low Income Housing Coalition.
<http://nlihc.org/sites/default/files/HousingSpotlight2-2.pdf>

² 'Facts About NYCHA' (2016) New York City Housing Authority
<https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/nycha/downloads/pdf/factsheet.pdf>

³ 'New York City Officials Brace for Possible Federal Funding Cuts Under Trump' (2016), Mary Gray, Wall Street Journal <https://www.wsj.com/articles/new-york-city-officials-brace-for-possible-federal-funding-cuts-under-trump-1481803200>