



National Update - January, 2024

This year marks the 50th Anniversary for the National American Indian Housing Council (NAIHC). We are grateful to our members, funders and supporters who have rallied around our mission statement. This brief report provides an overview and update of our activities as well as our plans for the future.

Our work in Indian country centers primarily around advocacy for housing opportunities and increased funding levels, training programs on a wide variety of topics provided to Native housing professionals, on-site technical assistance, and providing annual conference events for our industry.

Conferences and Events

We continue to provide three primary opportunities for our members to sharpen their skills and promote their housing operations: the Legislative Conference held every February; the landmark Annual Conference held typically in May or June; and the annual event focusing on legal issues – the Legal Symposium held at year end. We broke an all-time record with over 800 attendees at our Annual Conference in 2023, held in beautiful Waikoloa, Hawaii. We also worked together with HUD's Office of Native American Program on a fourth event, staging the Native American National Housing Summit in early November. That summit garnered accolades and kudos from those attending.

Two events are being organized for 2024: NAIHC's Legislative Conference will be held in Washington DC, February 4-7, 2024 and our annual conference – a 50th Anniversary Celebration, June 23-27, 2024 at the Hard Rock Resort and Casino in Hollywood Florida. Planning is underway to find a date and venue for the 2024 Legal Symposium, always a popular event among our members.

As noted below, we strongly support and will assist members in taking an active role in Congressional advocacy. For example, NAIHC staff will assist in arranging a meeting and providing talking points for your staff when they go to Capitol Hill to meet with their members of Congress during our Legislative Conference. Register here: <http://naihc.net/legislative-conference/> We'll be hosting an Open House at our office on February 7 when you will be scheduling visits with members of Congress.

Management Changes

Last year, we experienced the departure of several of our top leaders and staff, which was challenging. At one point, we had posted five job announcements on our website! With every challenge comes opportunity, and we decided to restructure our operations to become more efficient and responsive to our member's needs. For example, we created a new position entitled Director of Operations, which will bring more extensive finance and accounting skills to our organization. In filling vacancies, we have focused on the skill sets that we need to continue our training and technical assistance work in Indian country. We are currently interviewing five finalists for the Executive Director role. We also selected two professionals on staff for promotions: Ryan Edwards became our Finance & Operations Manager and Erla Sagg became our Training and Technical Assistance Program Manager. Our goal is to continue to build capacity by hiring or promoting experienced staff to support added funding levels awarded to us through grants.

Legislative Advocacy

We continued to relentlessly urge Congress to reauthorize NAHASDA – which is long overdue, and to increase funding levels that are well below levels to even keep even with inflation. Some bullet points (continued on page 2):

- NAHASDA passed the Senate with overwhelming support as an Amendment to the NDAA in July 2023
 - Included the establishment of a Drug Elimination plan and Tribal HUD VASH Program.
 - Unfortunately, it was left off the NDAA during conference and did not make it into the final bill.
 - Our NAHASDA strategy moving forward will be to reauthorize NAHASDA through appropriation bills. We aim to achieve this goal by targeting key members and champions of native housing through targeted “call to action” campaigns and Congressional meetings.
- Rep. Kevin McCarthy was ousted as Speaker of the House for the first time in United States History. After a 22-day vacancy, Rep. Mike Johnson (R-LA) was elected.
 - Congress passed a staggered continuing resolution (CR) in November with January 19th and February 2nd deadlines.
 - Funding will cease for the Departments of Transportation, Agriculture, Housing and Urban Development, and Veterans Affairs if spending bills are not passed by the January deadline. Most other government agencies and functions will be funded through Feb. 2.
 - If the respective bills are not passed by their deadlines the Government will shut down.

Congressional Funding

- FY23 funding is staggered between January 19th and February 2nd deadlines
- FY23 package included ~2% increase for tribal housing programs
 - Full FY23 Appropriations passed on December 23:
 - Saw increases for IHBG, ICDBG, HUD 184 Loan Guarantee, and HUD-VASH grants
- FY2024 Budget has yet to be passed.
 - It is unlikely that the January deadline will be met to pass the respective spending bills. Before members left for the Christmas recess, an agreement on a broad spending limit had not been agreed on, leaving very little time for them to hammer out details when they return in the new year.

See the chart on the following page on funding levels for housing in Indian country.

President Biden Executive Order

President Biden issued an Executive Order titled *"Reforming Federal Funding and Support for Tribal Nations to Better Embrace Our Trust Responsibilities and Promote the Next Era of Tribal Self-Determination."* This order instructs Federal agencies to explore compacts, contracts, and other agreements enabling tribes to collaborate with the government in administering programs and services. It also calls for the identification and elimination of unnecessary restrictions on how tribes utilize Federal funds and aims to address cost-sharing requirements.

HUD-VASH

- Was not included in the final NDAA as the NAHASDA amendment was dropped
- The Standalone bill was introduced on June 15, 2023. It is currently still in committee.

Other Housing Bills

- S. 70, Tribal Trust Land Homeownership Act
 - *Four bipartisan cosponsors:*
 - *Thune (SD), Smith (MN), Rounds (SD), Tester (MT)*
 - Bill would codify timelines for BIA to process mortgage related documents regarding trust lands (TSRs, etc)
 - Bill passed in the Senate by unanimous consent and has been received in the House.
- On December 11, 2023, H.R.2839 (Rep. Hoyle, D-OR), To amend the Siletz Reservation Act to address the hunting, fishing, trapping, and animal gathering rights of the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, passed the House, and was sent to the Senate for consideration.

- On December 11, 2023, the House passed H.R.5378, which contains language to reauthorize the Special Diabetes Program for Indians for Fiscal Years (FY) 2024 and 2025 at \$170 million a year. This is a \$20 million increase from previous funding levels. The bill now moves to the Senate for consideration.
- On December 18, 2023, the Senate passed, by unanimous consent, S.950, the Technical Correction to the Shoshone-Paiute Tribes of the Duck Valley Reservation Water Rights Settlement Act of 2023, and was sent to the House for consideration.

Congressional Funding Overview

Programs	Fiscal Year 2022	Fiscal Year 2023	Fiscal Year 2024 President's Budget Request	NAIHC Recommendation
Indian Housing Block Grants	\$772 million	\$787 million	\$820 million	\$1.642 billion, no less than \$1.111 billion
Competitive IHBG	\$150 million	\$150 million	\$150 million	*combined above
T&TA grants	\$7 million	\$7 million	\$7 million	\$7 million
Indian Community Development Block Grant	\$72.1 million	\$75 million	\$75 million	\$100 million
Title VI Loan Guarantee	\$1 million	\$1 million	\$1 million	\$1 million
Section 184 Loan Guarantee	\$3.5 million	\$5.5 million	\$906 thousand**	\$10 million
Native Hawaiian Housing Block Grant	\$22.3 million	\$22.3 million	\$22.3 million	\$20 million
Tribal HUD-VASH	\$5 million	\$7.5 million	\$5 million	\$7.5 million
HIP	\$11.7 million	\$12.2 million	\$18 million	\$23 million
Rural Development 502 Single Family Direct Loan	\$1.25 billion *general program, not tribal specific	\$1.25 billion +\$10 million for Native CDFI Re-lending Pilot	\$1.5 billion +\$17 million for Native CDFI Re-lending Pilot	\$1.5 billion (general) with tribal set-aside

(** HUD indicates that existing program carryover funds are sufficient to carry out these activities even with less appropriations in FY24)

For further information, contact Joseph B. Diehl, our Interim Executive Director at jdiehl@naihc.net or call (206) 290-5498