



# CHAPA Housing eBriefs

September 13, 2018



## State Updates

### **DHCD Issues Proposed Guidance on LIHTC Income Averaging**

On September 5, [DHCD issued proposed guidance](#) on the new income averaging set-aside option for the Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program. Under changes to LIHTC signed into law earlier this year, a project may now qualify for the federal tax credit if 40% or more of the units are both rent-restricted and occupied by households with incomes less than or equal to 60% of Area Median Income.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**September 18, 2018**

CHAPA Young Professionals and the Mel King Institute Alliance for Racial Equity's [Mentoring Program information session](#)

**October 24, 2018**

[CHAPA's Breakfast Forum: Construction & Design for Today and Tomorrow](#)

**December 4, 2018**

[CHAPA's 51st Annual](#)

DHCD will hold several information sessions on income averaging over the next month. Download DHCD's proposed guidance [here](#).

### **CHAPA Congratulates City Councilor Pressley, Thanks Rep. Capuano**

On September 4, Representative Mike Capuano, who has served in the House of Representatives since 1999, lost the November primary election for the Massachusetts 7th Congressional district to Boston City Councilor Ayanna Pressley. CHAPA thanks Rep. Capuano for his longstanding support for affordable housing, including helping to defend and expand federal housing programs, strengthening protections for people facing foreclosure, and supporting multifamily housing.

CHAPA congratulates Councilor Pressley on her election and we look forward to working with her on affordable housing and community development issues in Congress.

### **CHAPA Congratulates Santiago and Elugardo, Thanks Reps. Rushing and Sánchez**

In the same primary election, two longtime affordable housing champions, State Representatives Byron Rushing and Jeffrey Sánchez, were defeated in the Massachusetts Primary Elections. Rep. Rushing, who represented the South End in Boston since 1983, championed homelessness, housing, and civil rights issues. Rep. Sánchez, who represented Jamaica Plain in Boston since 2003 and became Chair of the powerful House Ways and Means Committee this year, was instrumental in passing the \$1.8 billion Housing Bond Bill as well as the strongest state budget for affordable housing programs in years. CHAPA thanks the Representatives for their decades of public service and dedication to affordable housing.

CHAPA congratulates Jon Santiago and Nika Elugardo, who will replace Reps. Rushing and Sánchez, respectively, on their elections. We look forward to working with you to advance affordable housing in the Commonwealth.

### **Boston Children's Hospital Announces \$11 Million in Community Health Awards**

[Dinner](#)



In August, the [CHAPA Young Professionals Group](#) continued its Summer Series with a walking tour of Quincy's [Winter Gardens](#) and [The Watson](#) (currently in construction). Thank you to NeighborWorks of Southern MA for hosting!



CHAPA welcomes three new staff members since May: Sean Tierney, Senior Policy Analyst; Jenna Connolly, Communications & Events Manager; and Whitney Demetrius, Municipal Engagement Associate.

[JOIN CHAPA](#)

[DONATE TO CHAPA](#)

[JOIN OUR EMAIL LIST](#)

On August 28, [Boston Children's Hospital announced \\$11 million](#) in its first set of Community Health Initiative awards under the state's Determination of Need program, which requires hospitals to make community health investments as part of the approval process for major capital projects. The awards from Boston Children's Hospital focused on social determinants of health, including family housing stability and economic opportunity. Awardees included numerous housing groups; find the full list of awardees [here](#).



## Federal Updates

### **HUD Awards 550 MA Rental Vouchers for Persons with Disabilities**

On September 4, the U.S. Department of [HUD awarded nearly \\$99 million](#) for new Section 811 mainstream rental vouchers to provide permanent housing to an additional 12,000 low-income residents throughout the United States, including 550 vouchers for Massachusetts. The two largest awards in the state were to Boston and Cambridge, who received 99 and 89 vouchers, respectively.

### **HUD Publishes FY2019 Fair Market Rents**

On August 31, HUD published the [Fiscal Year 2019 Fair Market Rents](#) (FMRs), which are used to determine payment standards for many affordable housing programs. The FMR for a two-bedroom apartment in the Metro Boston area increased from \$1,441 per month to \$1,524 per month. Public housing agencies and other interested parties may comment on the FMRs and request a reevaluation within 30 days.

### **Request for Comments on Reforming the**

## **Community Reinvestment Act**

On August 28, the [Office of the Comptroller of the Currency \(OCC\)](#) released an [Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking](#) for the Community Reinvestment Act (CRA). Proponents of updating the CRA point out the last significant reform was in 1995, before the Internet and interstate banking were widespread business practices. Housing advocates maintain any changes to the CRA must ensure the law continues to benefit low- and moderate-income communities and does not lead to displacement. Comments are due by November 19.

## **CHAPA Submits Comment Letter to HUD to Protect Disparate Impact Rule**

In August, [CHAPA submitted a comment letter to HUD](#) in response to the Department's reconsideration of the Obama Administration's Disparate Impact rule under the Fair Housing Act. Specifically, HUD requested public comment on whether the rule is consistent with the 2015 U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs v Inclusive Communities Project*. Disparate Impact liability arises in cases where a seemingly neutral practice has a discriminatory effect on a protected class. The Inclusive Communities decision affirmed the use of disparate impact as a way to prove Fair Housing violations.



## **Recent Research**

### **Who Participates in Local Government? Evidence from Meeting Minutes**

New [research from Boston University](#) shows local political participation in housing and development policy is dominated by individuals who are older, male, white, long-

time residents, voters in local elections, and homeowners. Moreover, the research finds [these individuals overwhelmingly oppose new housing construction](#). The authors of the study conclude these participatory inequalities may be contributing to rising housing costs.

### **Embedding Health in Affordable Housing Development**

Research [published in Cityscape](#) examines the results of the Health Action Plan Pilot Project, which promotes collaboration between CDCs and public health professionals to improve resident health outcomes. The study found the process allowed CDCs to gain a deeper understanding of how housing can impact health and how engaging residents improved the development process.

### **Federal Policy Changes to Help Families Live in High-Opportunity Areas**

A [paper from the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities](#) (CBPP) reviews research on where children in families with housing vouchers live and how the type of neighborhood in which children grow up impacts their future. The paper also describes four federal policy changes that would help more families in the Housing Choice Voucher program live in higher-opportunity neighborhoods.

### **LIHTC Could Do More to Expand Opportunity**

A recent [paper published by CBPP](#) examines how states can raise the share of LIHTC units in low-poverty neighborhoods. The study finds 16% of all LIHTC units in Massachusetts are in low-poverty neighborhoods, with that share increasing to 21% when only accounting for the last 5 years. The paper also makes recommendations for how states can increase production in higher opportunity areas through their Qualified Allocation Plans (QAPs) and leveraging other affordable housing resources.