

**Housing**

Across the nation, people with disabilities face a crisis in the availability of decent, safe, affordable, and accessible housing. For people who use wheelchairs or other mobility devices, finding housing with even basic accessibility features (e.g., an entrance with no steps) ranges from daunting to impossible. While there are unique issues in urban, suburban, and rural areas, this difficulty is magnified in rural areas where there is a scarcity of any rental housing and new units are rarely developed. For people with disabilities whose resources are limited to Supplemental Security Income benefits, the affordability crisis is even worse.

Therefore, during the 115th Congress, our public policy goals are to increase the supply of affordable and accessible housing options that are integrated in the community, including home ownership and rental housing, to meet the growing unmet needs of people with disabilities and their families by doing the following:

* Significantly increase funding for, and protecting the integrity of U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) programs such as the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher program, the Section 811 Supportive Housing for Persons with Disabilities program, the HOME Investment Partnerships program, the Community Development Block Grant program and increasing funding for U.S. Department of Agriculture housing programs as well as all other federal housing programs providing funding for people with disabilities;
* Provide funding to address the need for safe, affordable, and accessible housing for individuals with disabilities due to housing foreclosures, other financial crises, and weather-related and other emergencies;
* Ensure adequate funding and full implementation of the National Housing Trust Fund, with deeply targeted eligibility criteria to increase the availability of affordable and accessible housing for people with disabilities;
* Provide funding for and ensure proper implementation of the Frank Melville Supportive Housing Investment Act of 2010, which reformed the Section 811 Supportive Housing for Persons with Disabilities program to use proven “best practice” models to increase the number of units created, improve leveraging of other affordable housing funding streams, and develop a range of appropriately sized and integrated permanent housing opportunities;
* Oppose efforts to weaken fair housing protections or limit implementation and enforcement of fair housing rules;
* Remove barriers that prevent people from renting or buying their own homes, through:
  + simplifying programs;
  + ensuring appropriate fair-market rents;
  + eliminating discrimination based on source of income (such as SSI);
  + permitting people to acquire assets;
  + providing funding to educate and train public housing authorities and service providers on the housing needs of people with disabilities;
  + ensuring that non-profit disability organizations can administer tenant-based rental assistance; and
  + ensuring fairness and equity;
* Enact legislation requiring newly constructed, federally assisted housing to incorporate universal design and visitability standards (elements that afford accessibility to at least the first floor of a dwelling);
* Remove barriers and promote access to affordable, accessible housing for people with disabilities who have been involved in the criminal or juvenile justice systems;
* Require that projects developed through the Low Income Housing Tax Credit apply design standards identical to those in Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act; and
* Provide oversight of HUD’s management of housing programs to ensure that they meet the housing needs of people with disabilities.

To download the full legislative agenda, visit: <http://www.thearc.org/what-we-do/public-policy/legislative-agenda>