



**SENATE COMMITTEE AND FULL HOUSE PASS MAJOR HOUSING BILLS.** The unnumbered Federal Housing Finance Regulatory Reform Act of 2008 passed the Senate Banking Committee on May 20. It would create three new programs: a HOPE for Homeowners Program that would expand FHA's foreclosure prevention role, a National Affordable Housing Trust Fund to finance housing for extremely and very low-income households, and a Capital Magnet Fund making grants to CDFIs and other nonprofits for housing and community development. Funding for all three would come from Fannie Mae's and Freddie Mac's profits, with the foreclosure program receiving all available funds in 2009, half in 2010, and 25% in 2011. The bill would also create a new regulator for Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac, and the 12 Federal Home Loan Banks. ♦ On May 8 the House passed H.R. 3221, a comprehensive housing package to provide FHA loans for some owners facing foreclosure and new counseling funds, modernize FHA, reform GSE oversight, and more. Also on May 8 the House passed H.R. 5818, the Neighborhood Stabilization Act of 2008, providing \$15 billion in grants and loans to states to handle foreclosed properties. ♦ The White House has threatened to veto both House bills and has not yet reacted to the Senate bill. ♦ More detailed summaries are available at [http://www.ruralhome.org/infoAnnouncements\\_2008HousingCrisis.php](http://www.ruralhome.org/infoAnnouncements_2008HousingCrisis.php).

**FARM BILL PASSES CONGRESS, VETO EXPECTED.** The Farm Bill, H.R. 2419, passed both houses of Congress last week with enough favorable votes to override President Bush's anticipated veto. The bill's rural development provisions, which focus on business and utilities programs, also make processing workers eligible for Section 514/516 farm labor housing. The bill is available at <http://thomas.loc.gov>.

**HUD OFFERS CHDOS GREEN BUILDING FUNDS.** Participating Jurisdictions can apply by July 1 for HOME funds to be used by Community Housing Development Organizations for green building activities. See *Federal Register*, 5/16/08, pp. 28663-97 or <http://www.grants.gov>. Contact Ginger Macomber, HUD, 202-402-4605.

**RHED APPLICATION HELP POSTED ON HAC'S SITE.** Archives from HAC's audio-web training for HUD's Rural Housing and Economic Development program and other materials are available at [http://www.ruralhome.org/infoAnnouncements\\_RHED2008.php](http://www.ruralhome.org/infoAnnouncements_RHED2008.php). Application deadline is May 30.

**HUD-VASH VOUCHER CORRECTIONS ISSUED.** (See *HAC News*, 5/7/08.) See *Federal Register*, 5/19/08, p. 28863 at <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/fr/>. Contact a local PHA or David A. Vargas, HUD, 202-708-2815.

**STIMULUS PAYMENTS NOT INCOME, HUD SAYS.** HUD Notice PIH-2008-23 states that economic stimulus payments should not be counted as income for public housing and Section 8 residents. Similar notices may be forthcoming for other programs. See <http://www.hud.gov/offices/adm/hudclips/notices> or contact a HUD office.

**GAO FINDS USDA CIVIL RIGHTS EFFORTS STILL LACKING.** In testimony to a House committee, GAO reported that USDA continues to have a backlog of complaints about discrimination in farm programs, and planning and data reporting are insufficient. A future report will make recommendations. *U.S. Department of Agriculture: Management of Civil Rights Efforts Continues to Be Deficient Despite Years of Attention* (GAO-08-755T) is free at <http://www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-08-755T> or from GAO, 202-512-6000.

**NEW POVERTY-CUTTING CAMPAIGN ANNOUNCED.** Half in Ten: From Poverty to Prosperity, a new campaign to cut poverty by 50% over the next ten years, was created by ACORN, the Center for American Progress Action Fund, the Coalition on Human Needs, and the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, and features Sen. John Edwards as national chair. Visit <http://www.halfinten.org>.

**HAC EXAMINES IMPLICATIONS OF SECTION 515 PROPERTY LOCATIONS.** A new report on characteristics of the locations of Section 515 rental units and proximity to other federally subsidized properties cautions against assuming that Section 515 tenants have other housing options. *Connecting the Dots: A Location Analysis of USDA's Section 515 Rental Housing and Other Federally Subsidized Rental Properties in Rural Areas*, made possible with funding from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, is free at <http://www.ruralhome.org> or \$10 from Luz Rosas, HAC, 202-842-8600, [luz@ruralhome.org](mailto:luz@ruralhome.org).

**HAC INVITES NOMINATIONS FOR RURAL HOUSING AWARDS.** At the National Rural Housing Conference in December, HAC will present three awards: the Clay Cochran Award for an individual or individuals providing outstanding and enduring service on the national level, the Skip Jason Award for a local leader or leaders in rural housing development, and, for the first time this year, the Henry B. Gonzalez Award for a publicly elected official or officials. Nominations are due September 15. For details visit <http://www.ruralhome.org/Conf2008/awards.php> or contact Lilla Sutton, HAC, 202-842-8600, [lilla@ruralhome.org](mailto:lilla@ruralhome.org).