USDA RD showed strong performance in FY16. Funds for most of the rural housing programs were fully obligated in fiscal year 2016, which ended September 30. Section 502 direct used not only its entire $900 million loan total, but also an additional $58.3 million that was not being used in other programs. Obligations to very low-income borrowers comprised 40% of the total, compared to 31.8% last year. (See HAC News 8/25/16.) There were also 127 Multifamily Housing Preservation and Revitalization program loans or grants ($96.1 million) obligated, a decrease of $9.5 million (22 loans or grants) over last year. Details are in HAC’s monthly Program Obligation Report for September.

HUD requests comments on utility benchmarking. The department proposes to require owners of HUD-assisted multifamily properties to report data for utility benchmarking, which means tracking the utility consumption of a development on an on-going basis, calculating the energy and water efficiency of the development, and comparing its efficiency to similar developments. The mandate would apply to Section 202 and 811 properties, those with project-based Section 8 contracts, and those with FHA insurance. Data reporting would be required for properties with 21 units or more, while smaller properties would be encouraged to submit data. Owners would provide the figures every three years or when similar information is required. Comments are due December 5. Contact Stan Houle, HUD, 202-708-2572.

Assets for Independence IDA program funds available. Nonprofits can apply by October 31, 2016 or April 3, 2017 for grants to administer projects that provide individual development accounts and related services to low-income individuals. State, local, and tribal governments, as well as CDFIs and credit unions, are also eligible in specific situations. Participants can use savings for a first home, a business, or post-secondary education or training. Request an application package at http://idaresources.acf.hhs.gov/apply or from info@IDAresources.org.

USDA RD offers webinar on Limited English Proficiency compliance. Free webinars covering the same content will be held on October 25 at 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Eastern time. Register at http://www.eventbrite.com/e/usda-rural-development-limited-english-proficiency-lep-compliance-tickets-28539845446. Attendee groups and those needing special accommodations should email Darren Kaihlanen at USDA.

2017 DDA and QCT designations announced. HUD’s annual designation of DDAs and QCTs for the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit will be effective January 1, 2017. Contact Michael K. Hollar, HUD, 202-402-5878.

CFPB amends mortgage servicing rules. A final rule from the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau alters parts of its regulations under the Real Estate Settlement Procedures Act and the Truth in Lending Act. CFPB has also issued an interpretive rule to clarify how some of its mortgage servicing rules interact with the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act, providing safe harbors from liability for mortgage servicers in some situations. Contact CFPB’s Office of Regulations, 202-435-7700.

Some USDA Community Facilities loans to be made by intermediaries. Twenty-six community development organizations were recently approved to re-lend long-term, low-interest financing to local entities to build, acquire, maintain, or renovate community facilities in rural places. For more information, contact a USDA RD State Office.

HUD previous participation review rule changed. Amendments to HUD’s regulations for multifamily housing programs and healthcare funding are intended to clarify and simplify the process for reviewing the previous participation of participants that have decision-making authority over their projects. Contact Danielle Garcia, HUD, 202-402-2768.

Long waiting lists for HUD vouchers and public housing reported by NLIHC. Housing Spotlight: The Long Wait for a Home explains a National Low Income Housing Coalition survey of public housing agencies showed 53% of Housing Choice Voucher waiting lists were closed to new applicants and another 4% were open only to specific populations, such as homeless individuals and families, veterans, persons with a disability, or local residents. HCV waiting lists had a median wait time of 1.5 years and public housing lists had a nine-month median wait. The
survey included PHAs of all sizes in metro and nonmetro areas, though the results are not reported by size or location.

**HAC issues disaster guide supplement for Hurricane Matthew survivors.** The special update provides targeted information in addition to HAC’s general natural disaster guide, *Picking Up the Pieces.*

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**REGISTER NOW FOR THE 2016 HAC RURAL HOUSING CONFERENCE!** The national conference will be held November 30-December 2 in Washington, DC with pre-conference activities on November 29. Information about registration, scholarships, exhibiting, and more is online.