

to the Committee on Appropriations and ordered to be printed:

To the Congress of the United States:

Pursuant to my constitutional authority and as contemplated by section 446 of the District of Columbia Self-Government and Governmental Reorganization Act as amended in 1989, I am transmitting the District of Columbia's fiscal year (FY) 2015 Budget and Financial Plan. This transmittal does not represent an endorsement of the contents of the D.C. government's requests.

The proposed FY 2015 Budget and Financial Plan reflects the major programmatic objectives of the Mayor and the Council of the District of Columbia. For FY 2015, the District estimates total revenues and expenditures of \$12.6 billion.

BARACK OBAMA.
THE WHITE HOUSE, March 20, 2015.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 4 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 8 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1600

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. CARTER of Georgia) at 4 p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later.

TENANT INCOME VERIFICATION RELIEF ACT OF 2015

Mr. STIVERS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 233) to allow reviews of certain families' incomes every 3 years for purposes of determining eligibility for certain Federal assisted housing programs.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 233

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Tenant Income Verification Relief Act of 2015".

SEC. 2. REVIEWS OF FAMILY INCOMES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The second sentence of paragraph (1) of section 3(a) of the United

States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437a(a)(1)) is amended by inserting before the period at the end the following: "; except that, in the case of any family with a fixed income, as defined by the Secretary, after the initial review of the family's income, the public housing agency or owner shall not be required to conduct a review of the family's income for any year for which such family certifies, in accordance with such requirements as the Secretary shall establish, which shall include policies to adjust for inflation-based income changes, that 90 percent or more of the income of the family consists of fixed income, and that the sources of such income have not changed since the previous year, except that the public housing agency or owner shall conduct a review of each such family's income not less than once every 3 years".

(b) HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM.—Subparagraph (A) of section 8(o)(5) of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437f(o)(5)(A)) is amended by striking "not less than annually" and inserting "as required by section 3(a)(1) of this Act".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. STIVERS) and the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. PERLMUTTER) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Ohio.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. STIVERS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to add extraneous material on this bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

Mr. STIVERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise today in support of H.R. 233, the Tenant Income Verification Relief Act, and I am proud to cosponsor it with my colleague from Colorado (Mr. PERLMUTTER).

This is a very simple bill that helps relieve stressful burdens of fixed-income tenants who participate in the housing choice voucher and project-based housing programs all across the country. Additionally, it is a responsible reform bill that will allow housing authorities to work more efficiently and effectively at less cost to the taxpayers.

I have heard from housing authorities from Columbus, Ohio, from Circleville, Ohio, from other parts of my district, and throughout the country about how burdensome this requirement is on elderly tenants as well as on the housing authorities.

Current law requires tenant verification of income at move-in and recertification annually. This legislation allows for the recertification of residents' incomes every 3 years rather than annually for individuals and families on fixed incomes.

It will permit housing authorities to verify these tenants' incomes when they change as well as annually. Based on a recent U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development study of these 2 million residents on fixed in-

comes, about half of them are on very fixed incomes that are not changing. Most of them are using Social Security as their main source of income.

This bill is a great first step toward ensuring our Nation's low-income families have safe places to live, while also reducing administrative burdens on families and on these housing authorities and toward saving taxpayer resources. I ask my colleagues to join me and Mr. PERLMUTTER in supporting this commonsense legislation.

Finally, I would like to thank the gentleman from Colorado for his leadership and for his commonsense approach on this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I want to thank Mr. STIVERS for joining me in H.R. 233, and I want to thank the chairman of the committee, Mr. HENSARLING, and the ranking member, Ms. WATERS, for their support of this bill as well.

Mr. STIVERS has described it well, but I think we should go through it one more time, just so the record is clear for future generations.

H.R. 233, the Tenant Income Verification Relief Act of 2015, represents a bipartisan effort to aid our most vulnerable constituents and to provide marginal regulatory relief to public housing authorities and to those who have privately owned rental properties who wish to service housing vouchers.

Currently, private property owners and State and local housing agencies must review income annually for all rental assistance recipients. That includes recipients who receive most or all of their income from fixed sources—such as from Social Security or other pensions—and, therefore, see little income change from year to year.

Our legislation reduces administrative burdens by allowing for the recertification of rent and income to occur every 3 years rather than annually for those on fixed incomes. In other words, housing authorities and those who accept vouchers would be allowed to conduct triennial income recertifications for households of which 90 percent or more of their income is fixed.

The annual review requirement also places burdens on those within fixed income households themselves, who must gather and submit information needed to verify income and deductions and who, in some cases, must go to agencies for in-person reviews.

The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, which wrote in support of H.R. 233, said that this change would substantially reduce paperwork burdens for low-income seniors and for people with disabilities and administrative costs for agencies and owners.

More than half of rental assistance recipients are elderly or disabled, who often rely on fixed incomes, and income reviews are the single largest source of rental assistance administrative costs.

Due to ongoing budget pressures, our public housing authorities are struggling to manage their Section 8 housing programs. In fact, it is estimated the amount Congress appropriates to fund the housing choice voucher program is only 74 percent of what is actually required to run the program.

The Public Housing Authorities Directors Association wrote to me, saying:

Both in principle and in practice, your bill is a commonsense approach to streamlining Federal rental assistance programs at a time when scarce financial resources are straining housing authorities' program delivery.

Since continued budget pressures are precluding Congress from funding the cost of administering this program 100 percent, we must look at solutions to control expenses or the cost of running the program.

This provision or concept is not new. In fact, it has been included in several comprehensive Section 8 reform bills by both Democrats and Republicans. In fact, the administration included language similar to H.R. 233 in the 2016 budget proposal.

I stand here today with my friend, Mr. STIVERS from Ohio, with a reasonable and commonsense proposal, making our public housing programs more efficient, and we all want to find ways to make our government run more efficiently.

I have a number of letters to include for the RECORD.

PUBLIC HOUSING AUTHORITIES
DIRECTORS ASSOCIATION,
Washington, DC, January 12, 2015.

Hon. ED PERLMUTTER,
House of Representatives,
Washington DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN PERLMUTTER: On behalf of the Public Housing Authorities Directors Association (PHADA), I would like to thank you for introducing the Tenant Income Verification Relief Act of 2015 (HR 233) as an original co-sponsor. If enacted, this bill would allow Housing Authorities (HAs) to conduct triennial recertifications for households where 90 percent or more their income is fixed.

Passage of the Tenant Income Verification Relief Act of 2015 would benefit millions of low-income elderly and disabled households with fixed incomes in the Section 8 Tenant-Based Voucher and Public Housing programs. Fixed-income households, who are served by Housing Authorities, would benefit if they could be spared from having to go through the burdensome, confusing and stressful recertification process annually but to do so every three years instead.

Many households who receive Federal rental assistance live on fixed incomes. According to HUD's Resident Characteristics Report August 2013 through November 2014, approximately 20 percent of voucher-assisted households have a disabled head of household and approximately 22 percent have an elderly head of household. Approximately 17 percent of Public Housing-assisted households have a disabled head of household and approximately 31 percent have an elderly head of household. Although HUD's national data reflects a degree of overlap in households' types of income, approximately 55 percent of households receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Social Security and/or a pension for all or some of their annual income, in both Section 8 tenant-based and Public Housing programs.

Your legislation would also produce cost-savings for Housing Authorities, which struggle each year from downward funding prorations in Section 8 voucher program administrative fees and/or the Public Housing Operating Fund. Taken together, the above figures illustrate the scope and scale of relief that would benefit applicable low-income households and the Housing Authorities that serve them.

Legislation regarding triennial recertifications for fixed-income households has been a feature of both House and Senate authorizing rental assistance reform bills for several years, but has not been enacted into law yet. PHADA has demonstrated the adverse impacts of downward funding prorations, in terms of Housing Authorities' operations to serve low-income households, participating property owners and the communities in which they live. Introduction of the bill is an important step for future action that could not come a moment too soon.

Both in principle and practice your bill is a common sense approach to streamlining Federal rental assistance programs at a time when scarce financial resources are straining Housing Authorities' program delivery. Given the urgent need for relief to low-income households and Housing Authorities, we believe that the bill can and should be enacted either as an amendment or a stand-alone bill as soon as possible.

Thank you and your staff for working on issues important to HAs and the low-income people they serve. PHADA and its members look forward to working with you and your colleagues to secure passage of the bill.

If you need any information or have questions, please feel free to call me at 202-546-5445.

Sincerely,

TIMOTHY G. KAISER,
Executive Director.

MARCH 20, 2015.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: The real estate industry is pleased that Congress supports efforts to streamline rental assistance programs. Our industry believes it is imperative for Congress to pass legislation that will improve the federally assisted housing rental programs for both residents and owners alike: doing so saves taxpayer dollars and eliminates inefficiencies. We support H.R. 233, the "Tenant Income Verification Relief Act of 2015" introduced by Congressman Perlmutter (D-CO) and Congressman Stivers (R-OH).

Our organizations represent owners, management companies, lenders, builders, developers, and housing cooperatives. We have long-supported these programs. The Housing Choice Voucher program provides rental subsidies to approximately two million low income households who obtain housing in the private rental market. This program broadens the range of housing choices for families seeking affordable housing, has a high success rate and serves as the cornerstone for public federal housing policy. The Project-Based Rental Assistance programs house nearly 1.3 million families and elderly households in privately owned housing—representing successful public and private partnerships that not only provide quality housing but often connect residents with services. This is particularly important for elderly residents, who may otherwise be forced to move to nursing homes. These programs are essential tools that also preserve and expand the supply of quality affordable housing, a necessity in today's tight rental markets.

However, in spite of the overall success, the programs suffer under the weight of too many inefficient and duplicative requirements. The myriad overlapping and redun-

dant procedures make the programs difficult to administer and, with respect to the voucher program, deter many professional landlords from participating. As such, we have worked diligently with Congress for several years to formulate common sense legislation that would streamline the sometimes burdensome procedures associated with operating and maintaining an assisted housing portfolio.

H.R. 233 significantly reduces administrative burdens by allowing for the recertification of residents' income to occur every three years rather than annually for those residents on fixed incomes, permitting verification review efforts to focus on those whose incomes change.

We urge you to support efforts to streamline the assisted housing programs and urge Congress to pass H.R. 233, the "Tenant Income Verification Relief Act of 2015."

Sincerely,

Council for Affordable and Rural Housing (CARH); Institute of Real Estate Management (IREM); Leading Age; National Apartment Association (NAA); National Affordable Housing Management Association (NAHMA); National Association of Home Builders (NAHB); National Association of Housing Cooperatives (NAHC); National Association of Realtors (NAR); National Leased Housing Association (NLHA); National Multifamily Housing Council (NMHC).

CENTER ON BUDGET
AND POLICY PRIORITIES,
Washington, DC, March 17, 2015.

Hon. JEB HENSARLING, Chairman,
Hon. MAXINE WATERS, Ranking Member,
Committee on Financial Services, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN HENSARLING AND RANKING MEMBER WATERS: The Tenant Income Verification Relief Act of 2015 (H.R. 233) is a well-designed, common sense measure to ease administrative burdens in federal rental assistance programs while maintaining key protections for low-income program participants. We strongly recommend that Congress move promptly to enact the bill.

Currently, owners and state and local housing agencies must review income annually for all rental assistance recipients. That includes recipients who receive most or all of their income from fixed sources such as Social Security or SSI and therefore see little income change from year to year. This requirement imposes sizable administrative costs. More than half of rental assistance recipients are elderly or disabled households that often rely on fixed incomes, and income reviews are the single largest source of rental assistance administrative costs. The annual review requirement also places burdens on the fixed-income households themselves, who must gather and submit information needed to verify income and deductions and in some cases must go to agency offices for in-person reviews.

HUD has eased burdens modestly by administratively streamlining review requirements for fixed-income households (and has proposed regulations to codify the change), but HUD lacks authority to allow less frequent reviews because the annual income review requirement is statutory. H.R. 233 would reduce the frequency of required reviews for fixed-income families to once every three years and direct HUD to establish procedures to adjust income for inflation in the intervening years. This change would substantially reduce paperwork burdens for low-income seniors and people with disabilities and administrative costs for agencies and owners. The need for the administrative savings is particularly acute now, since both the

Public Housing Operative Fund and Housing Choice Voucher administrative fees have been deeply underfunded in recent years.

The changes in H.R. 233 have been proposed in a series of bills that received strong bipartisan support. For example, provisions similar to H.R. 233 were included in both the Affordable Housing and Self-Sufficiency Improvement Act (AHSSIA), which a subcommittee of the House Financial Services Committee approved by a voice vote in January 2012, and the Section 8 Voucher Reform Act (SEVRA), which the House passed 333-83 in July 2007.

Congress should enact this important, timely, well-vetted proposal without further delay.

Sincerely,

BARBARA SARD,
Vice President for Housing Policy.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF HOUSING
AND REDEVELOPMENT OFFICIALS,
Washington, DC, March 19, 2015.

Hon. ED PERLMUTTER,
Longworth Building, Washington, DC.

Hon. STEVE STIVERS,
Longworth Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR REP. PERLMUTTER AND REP. STIVERS: On behalf of the over 22,000 members of the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (NAHRO), I am writing today to underscore our strong support for the expeditious approval of the Tenant Income Verification Act of 2015 (HR 233) that you are both sponsoring.

This common-sense legislation would amend the U.S. Housing Act of 1937 to allow PHAs to reduce the frequency of re-examinations for families that receive at least 90 percent of their income from fixed sources. PHAs would not be required to review a public housing or Section 8 family's income for any year for which the family certifies that it has a fixed income and the source of the income has not changed since the previous year. PHAs would be required to conduct a review of the family's income not less than once every three years; in any year in which a PHA does not conduct a review of income, a family's prior year income determination would be adjusted by applying an inflationary factor.

NAHRO strongly supports the bill's focus on reducing unnecessary administrative burdens. We also believe this legislation properly balances the need to maintain responsible government protections; the legislation does not adversely impact residents and provides long-overdue administrative relief that will increase local PHA's ability to address other pressing needs. Responsible reform legislation such as this ultimately enables PHAs to work more efficiently and effectively at less cost to the federal government.

NAHRO has been working with both HUD and members of Congress to bring about responsible programmatic and regulatory reforms. This legislation is a strong and necessary step forward. In this regard, we were pleased to see that the Administration included language similar to HR 233 in the FY 2016 budget proposal. We urge the House to approve this legislation under suspension of the rules so that it can be promptly sent to the Senate for adoption.

We stand ready to continue to work with members of Congress on both sides of the aisle to approve properly balanced programmatic reforms that sustain the ability of PHAs to provide decent, safe and affordable housing for vulnerable families.

Respectfully,

SAUL N. RAMIREZ JR.,
Chief Executive Officer, NAHRO.

NATIONAL LOW INCOME
HOUSING COALITION,
Washington, DC, March 18, 2015.

Hon. JEB HENSARLING,
Chair, House Committee on Financial Services,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

Hon. MAXINE WATERS,
Ranking Member, House Committee on Financial Services, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN HENSARLING AND RANKING MEMBER WATERS: On behalf of the National Low Income Housing Coalition, I am pleased to support H.R. 233, legislation that would allow public housing agencies to reduce the frequency of income recertifications for HUD rent assisted households whose income is at least 90% from fixed-income sources. Income recertifications for fixed-income households would be only every three years, instead of annually.

NLIHC members include non-profit housing providers, homeless service providers, fair housing organizations, state and local housing coalitions, public housing agencies, private developers and property owners, housing researchers, local and state government agencies, faith-based organizations, residents of public and assisted housing and their organizations, and concerned citizens. We do not represent any sector of the housing industry. Rather, NLIHC works only on behalf of and with low income people who need safe, decent, and affordable homes, especially those with the most serious housing problems, including people who are homeless. NLIHC is funded entirely with private contributions.

Because a tenant's share of rent is based on income, recertifications are done to make sure tenants are paying the correct amount of rent. The Department of Housing and Urban Development estimates that fixed-income families are about 50% of all public housing, housing choice voucher, and project-based rental assistance tenants. If implemented, this policy change could substantially reduce administrative duties for public housing agencies and owners, as well as recertification time for tenants.

This is an idea whose time has come. One of the suggestions resulting from the 2005 National Housing Voucher Summit, which NLIHC convened, was to implement rent simplification policies, including reducing the income recertification period for people whose income is largely from fixed sources, such as Social Security and SSI, to three years. In the years when recertifications are not required, Summit participants recommended, tenant incomes could be adjusted based on the cost-of-living adjustment in any income maintenance program in which the household participates.

We applaud Representatives Ed Perlmutter and Steve Stivers for introducing this important legislation and hope that Congress acts swiftly toward its enactment.

Sincerely,

SHEILA CROWLEY,
President and CEO.

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, it is my hope that we pass this today here on the floor of the House and that the Senate passes it quickly and sends it to the President's desk.

I thank my friend, Mr. STIVERS, for joining me on this bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. STIVERS. Mr. Speaker, in conclusion, I just want to ask all of my colleagues to support this legislation. It is common sense, and it simplifies an administrative burden. It saves money for taxpayers, and it allows people on fixed incomes, whether they be senior

citizens or disabled, to have less onerous burdens. This is a commonsense bill.

I thank the gentleman from Colorado for his leadership, and I urge everyone to support this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. STIVERS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 233.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

NATIVE AMERICAN HOUSING ASSISTANCE AND SELF-DETERMINATION REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2015

Mr. PEARCE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 360) to reauthorize the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act of 1996, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 360

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the “Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Reauthorization Act of 2015”.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents of this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

Sec. 2. References.

TITLE I—BLOCK GRANTS AND GRANT REQUIREMENTS

Sec. 101. Block grants.

Sec. 102. Recommendations regarding exceptions to annual Indian housing plan requirement.

Sec. 103. Environmental review.

Sec. 104. Deadline for action on request for approval regarding exceeding TDC maximum cost for project.

TITLE II—AFFORDABLE HOUSING ACTIVITIES

Sec. 201. National objectives and eligible families.

Sec. 202. Program requirements.

Sec. 203. Homeownership or lease-to-own low-income requirement and income targeting.

Sec. 204. Lease requirements and tenant selection.

Sec. 205. Tribal coordination of agency funding.

TITLE III—ALLOCATION OF GRANT AMOUNTS

Sec. 301. Authorization of appropriations.

Sec. 302. Effect of undisbursed block grant amounts on annual allocations.

TITLE IV—AUDITS AND REPORTS

Sec. 401. Review and audit by Secretary.

Sec. 402. Reports to Congress.

TITLE V—OTHER HOUSING ASSISTANCE FOR NATIVE AMERICANS

Sec. 501. HUD-Veterans Affairs supportive housing program for Native American veterans.