

Briefing Notice

The Multiple Benefits of Federal Housing and Energy Programs

Friday, February 8, 2019

2:00 PM – 3:30 PM

Room 2168 Rayburn House Office Building (“Gold Room”)

Please RSVP to expedite check-in: www.eesi.org/020819housing#rsvp
Live webcast (connection permitting) will be streamed at: www.eesi.org/livecast

Energy Efficiency for All (EEFA) and the **Environmental and Energy Study Institute** (EESI) invite you to a "101" briefing about federal programs that reduce housing and energy cost burdens for people in need. National policy experts who interact closely with state and local organizations will provide an overview of key programs, including statutory authority and appropriations, and how they impact the lives of recipients. Panelists will discuss how energy efficiency services result in lower home energy bills, which is critical for low-income families that spend a greater percentage of their income on energy. Speakers for this forum are:

- **Ellen Lurie Hoffman**, Federal Policy Director, National Housing Trust
- **Eric Behna**, Program Policy and Community Manager, National Association for State Community Services Programs (NASCSPP)
- **David Terry**, Executive Director, National Association of State Energy Officials (NASEO)
- **Katrina Metzler**, Executive Director, National Energy and Utility Affordability Coalition (NEUAC)
- **Michael Furze**, Director, Washington State Energy Office

According to a 2016 study of America's largest cities by EEFA and the American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy (ACEEE), the median low-income household spent 7.2 percent of its income on energy, twice as much as the median for all households (3.5 percent). The energy burden is even greater for rural households. Another EEFA/ACEEE report indicates that rural households have a median energy burden of 4.4 percent and that rural low-income households are even worse off, shouldering a median energy burden of 9 percent. When monthly bills for electricity and fuel take a large bite out of small paychecks, residents are often forced to choose between heating/cooling and other necessities like food and medicine. But high energy burdens are not simply a result of low incomes and/or high energy prices. Homes with inefficient appliances, lighting, and heating/air-conditioning systems as well as air leaking through roofs, walls and windows, use more energy and cost more to operate even if utility rates are low.

Reducing home energy use per square foot can lower utility bills and lighten the energy burden for low-income households; improve health, comfort, and quality of life; and reduce environmental impacts. EEFA/ACEEE studies have found that the **U.S. Department of Energy's Weatherization Assistance Program**, which retrofits single-family homes for those living at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty level, saves families an average of \$283 per year. In addition, affordable-housing developers rely on the **Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC)** to build and preserve energy-efficient, multi-family affordable housing. For the lowest income households, **rental assistance from HUD**, and the **Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)** from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, provide critical lifelines.

This event is free and open to the public.

For more information, contact Ellen Vaughan at evaughan@eesi.org or (202) 662-1893.

