

To: HJN Members

From: Noelle Porter, Director of Government Affairs

Re: Current Federal Shutdown

Date: January 8, 2019

Status of Bills in Congress

- Before talks broke down, House and Senate appropriators had been putting together packages, or “minibuses”, of spending bills to batch through the process.
 - The only successful vote included Defense and VA, Labor, HHS, and Education FY 2019 spending, and this minibus passed in September of 2018.
 - HUD and USDA spending were originally packaged together, and I have heard from professional staff that these bills are complete (and have been since August), and that there is agreement on the contents between the House and Senate.
 - In December, the remaining spending bills were packaged together to attempt to fund all outstanding agencies, but the President signaled that he would not sign a bill that didn’t include significantly increased funding for the border wall.
 - As soon as Democrats took control of the House on January 3, they sent two spending bills to the Senate to reopen the government.
 - One bill contained a short term continuing resolution (CR) for FY 2018 DHS spending so that talks over the wall could continue. The other contained finalized spending for FY 2019 for every other federal agency.
 - The Senate Majority Leader, Mitch McConnell, refused to bring these bills to the Senate floor for a vote citing the President’s potential to veto them.
 - Talks continue between the House and Senate leadership and the Administration, but we aren’t hearing much about progress.
 - House Appropriators also gave notice this weekend that they will begin passing individual spending bills including a Transportation-HUD bill, a USDA bill, and a bill from the Commerce committee with includes DOJ funding. It is not clear that Senator McConnell will consider bringing these to the Senate Floor.

Status of Agency Operations

- At HUD:
 - For PBRA, funding for the program should be fine through January, but after that, funding becomes more uncertain.
 - On Friday, January 4, HUD sent a [letter](#) to multi-family landlords asking them to begin using reserve funding.
 - For Section 202 Housing for the Elderly PRAC contracts, payments for January have been processed so those properties should be fine through the month. Issues could arise for contracts that come up for renewal after January.
 - PHAs may not have enough operating subsidies for public housing tenants, including housing any new families from wait lists.

- No REAC inspections will be conducted during the shutdown, and complaint response may be delayed or stalled.
 - TBRA will face challenges similar to public housing.
 - You can find NHLP's resources from previous shutdowns [here](#).
- At USDA:
 - RD has a contingency plan in place, but the picture of funding levels and how long they can last is less clear than at HUD.
 - [SNAP benefits](#) will be available through the end of this month, but it is uncertain if states will begin reducing benefits for some families or cutting some families from the program all together.
- At DOJ:
 - **[VAWA housing protections](#) are still in force.** This includes the VAWA 2013 housing statute (34 U.S.C. 12491) as well as the implementing regulations and administrative notices by HUD and USDA RD. Congress' failure to reauthorize the grants program does not sunset the protections from the 2013 law.
 - Further, long-term funding for VAWA's grant programs is not in apparent jeopardy. Both the House and Senate included funding for the grants in their FY 2019 bills despite the lack of passage of a reauthorization bill. However, reauthorization of these grants is important to ensure that appropriators will include this funding every year with certainty.
 - Programs with VAWA funding will continue despite the shutdown, but payment requests from programs will be delayed. These delays put significant financial strain on local programs.