

For Immediate Release
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Significant Affordable Housing Legislation Introduced
Homeless Advocates Praise National Housing Trust Fund Legislation

WASHINGTON, DC, June 27, 2007- House Financial Services Committee Chairman Barney Frank (D-MA) introduced legislation today that would establish a new program to create affordable housing for extremely low-income persons.

"The lack of affordable housing is the single, most important cause of homelessness," said Robert Nasdor, Legal Director of the National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty. "This bill has the potential to make a significant impact in the communities that will ultimately receive these funds."

H.R. 2895 would create the National Housing Trust Fund - a dedicated funding source for the production, preservation and rehabilitation affordable housing. It is estimated the Fund would create approximately of 1.5 million new homes in 10 years. At least 75% of the funds would be used to create housing for households that are extremely low-income, earning less than 30% of an area's median income.

All monies in the first year would be used to create housing in the Gulf Coast region, to assist individuals and families displaced by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

In addition to Representative Frank, original cosponsors include Representatives Charles Dent (R-PA), Philip English (R-PA), Al Green (D-TX), Barbara Lee (D-CA), John McHugh (R-NY), Christopher Murphy (D-CT), Jim Ramstad (R-MN), Rick Renzi (R-AZ), Christopher Shays (R-CT), Maxine Waters (D-CA), and Nydia Velasquez (D-NY).

On any given night, as many as 760,000 persons are homeless in the United States. Over the course of a year, as many as 3.5 million persons experience homelessness. According to the National Low-Income Housing Coalition, nationwide, there are only 6,187,000 homes renting at prices affordable to the 9,022,000 extremely low-income renter households - a shortage of 2,835,000 homes. Affordability is defined as costing no more than 30% of the household's income.

A coalition of over 5,600 non-profit organizations - including the National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty - has been pressing Congress to adopt a National Housing Trust Fund. Similar legislation in earlier Congresses was not enacted, but advocates are working to build sufficient support to get the bill enacted in the 110th Congress.

The mission of the National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty is to prevent and end homelessness by serving as the legal arm of the nationwide movement to end homelessness. To achieve its mission, NLCHP pursues three main strategies: impact litigation, policy advocacy, and public education.