

Dear NAHMA Member,

A new report by the independent Bipartisan Policy Center examines the critical need for the United States to better integrate America's health care and housing systems for its senior population. Titled [Healthy Aging Begins at Home](#), the report was developed over the past year by the Center's Senior Health and Housing Task Force and an expert advisory council. The report's recommendations focus on four key areas:

- 1) Building affordable housing for seniors;
- 2) Making homes and communities age-friendly;
- 3) Integrating health care and supportive services with housing; and
- 4) Promoting widespread adoption of health technologies to support successful aging.

Joining the Bipartisan Policy Center's efforts to reexamine the needs of senior citizens are former HUD Secretaries Mel Martinez and Henry Cisneros, along with former House Representatives Vin Weber and Allyson Schwartz.

Overall, the reports highlights the need for a federal response to the growing number of senior citizens and their needs. By 2030, 74 million Americans, representing more than 20 percent of the overall population, will be 65 years of age or more. About 70 percent of adults over 65 will eventually require help with bathing, food preparation, dressing, and medication management— assistance that is referred to as "long-term services and supports," or LTSS. Medicare does not cover LTSS, and the costs of this care can consume a large portion of a household's budget. In addition, only a small minority of Americans has long-term care insurance covering these expenses.

Coupled with the high costs associated with LTSS, a major obstacle that seniors face is the scarcity of affordable and available rental homes. This supply-demand imbalance most negatively impacts lower-income households, many of whom are older adults living on fixed incomes. The report states that in 2013, there were 11.2 million "extremely low-income" renter households competing for only 4.3 million affordable and available rental homes, resulting in a total shortfall of 6.9 million homes. Of the 11.2 million households in this competition, 2.6 million were elderly households with no children. The Bipartisan Policy Center anticipates that the current shortage of affordable rental homes will intensify in the years ahead as the low-income senior population grows and more seniors transition from homeownership to rental housing.

The report offers 10 recommendations to address the housing affordability crisis facing seniors, including urging Congress and the White House to support continued funding at sufficient levels for rental assistance and for service coordination under the Section 202 Supportive Housing for the Elderly program. Additionally the report recommends the preservation of existing Section 202 units by making them eligible for the Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) program as well as increased federal support for the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program to help finance the production and preservation of additional units of affordable rental housing.

The full report can be found on NAHMA's website [here](#)

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