With its practice-driven approach, Stewards of Affordable Housing for the Future (SAHF) advances policies for sustainability, affordability and positive resident outcomes in rental housing communities for families of limited economic means, seniors and persons with disabilities. These policies are not only a critical response to the pandemic, but an investment in the country’s infrastructure, providing a long-term asset of safe, quality homes that connect people to communities and resources.

### 2021 Legislative Priorities

**Strengthen and Expand the Housing Credit**
The Low income Housing Tax Credit is our nation’s most successful tool for encouraging private investment in the production and preservation of affordable housing.

- The Housing Credit has been oversubscribed for far too long, but the bipartisan Affordable Housing Credit Improvement Act (S. 1136/H.R. 2573) would expand each state’s Housing Credit allocation (the “9 percent credit”) by 50 percent and increase the availability of the “4 percent credit” by lowering the Private Activity Bond financing threshold from 50 to 25 percent. If enacted, these resources will create choice and opportunity by preserving and producing 2 million more affordable rental homes over 10 years.

- A subset of investors seeking to extract profits from affordable housing are threatening the affordability of homes and the sustainability of nonprofits serving the community by systemically challenging the rights of nonprofits to use their statutory right—known as the Housing Credit Right of First Refusal (ROFR)—to obtain full ownership when investors have fully claimed tax credits. These disputes can lead to litigation and jeopardize the residents living in these properties, the mission-driven nonprofits seeking to meet community needs and extend affordability, and Congressional intent. Congress should stop this extractive behavior, ensure intent and long-term affordability are met by establishing a protocol for nonprofit purchase options and clarifying ROFR agreements for existing partnerships.

**Renew and Expand Project-Based Rental Assistance**
The lack of affordable rental housing in many communities excludes low-income households and perpetuates patterns of segregation. Expanding rental assistance, especially project-based rental assistance (PBRA), is key to breaking these patterns. Congress should renew all existing PBRA contracts and seek opportunities to create new affordable homes in more communities through project-based assistance.

**Provide Targeted Resources for Senior Housing**
The number of households aged 65 and over is expected to grow by 20 million in the next fifteen years. Senior households are growing older, are increasingly likely to have disabilities related to mobility and self-care, and often have lower incomes than ever before. Congress should invest in programs that allow seniors to age in place and avoid unnecessary and costly institutionalization by taking the following actions:

- Provide at least $600 million in Section 202 Supportive Housing for the Elderly construction and operating funds.
- Provide additional funds to increase modest PRAC rents and/or provide capital repair grants for current Section 202 properties in connection with RAD for PRAC conversions.
- Expand Service Coordinator funding to all federally assisted communities. Service Coordinators play a vital role in connecting residents with resources and leveraging their connectivity to improve health and well-being. However, only half of Section 202 properties and small percentage of PBRA properties currently have Service Coordinators.
Support Residents’ Wealth Building and Well-Being
Federally-assisted affordable homes provide an effective platform to promote opportunity – by providing enhanced resident supports; by promoting digital inclusion; and by supporting financial stability, and access to high-opportunity communities, but much more can be done to leverage this platform. Congress should take the following actions:

- Provide $150 million for HUD’s Family Self Sufficiency (FSS) program in FY 2022. FSS is a proven model to promote earnings and savings for HUD-assisted households, combining personalized support with a financial incentive. The program has not yet scaled to multifamily properties due to lack of funding, but a larger federal investment could change that.
- Consider expanding utility allowances, requiring HUD to clarify guidance on owner-paid broadband, and develop interagency partnerships to extend digital access.

Create Healthier Communities and Combat Climate Change
Residential buildings are both a contributor to climate change through their energy use and vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and extreme weather events. Investing in efficiency, renewable energy, and resilience in multifamily affordable housing combats climate change, preserves housing affordability, and creates healthier communities.

- Congress should support retrofit initiatives specific to multifamily affordable housing such as the GREAHT proposal. A retrofit program run out of HUD is an opportunity to provide targeted assistance to the multifamily sector and take a holistic approach to efficiency, resilience, and health.
- The Weatherization Assistance Program, the nation’s primary program for improving energy efficiency for low-income households should be expanded to meet the needs multifamily housing. This should be further facilitated with categorical qualification to HUD-assisted properties.
- Congress should set aside funding for energy efficiency and resilience within existing housing program similar to the Housing is Infrastructure Act of 2021 draft while also ensuring that adequate funding is provided for properties with Project-Based Rental Assistance.
- Congress can encourage the use of renewable energy sources in affordable housing through their inclusion in retrofit programs, supporting community-solar initiatives, and extending tax credits that support renewable energy.
ABOUT SAHF

Stewards of Affordable Housing for the Future (SAHF) is a national collaborative of 13 nonprofit affordable housing developers. Together, SAHF members own, operate and manage over 148,000 affordable rental homes in 49 states, DC, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. SAHF’s mission-driven alliance uses the national experience of our members and partners to advance resident-centered policy changes and sustainable solutions in the affordable housing sector.

WHERE OUR MEMBERS WORK

SAHF members own 148,770 rental homes at 2,011 properties across the country. The map below shows the location of these properties.