

OUR HOMES, OUR VOTES

MEDIA TOOLKIT



NATIONAL LOW INCOME
HOUSING COALITION



It's no coincidence that low-income communities that face the greatest barriers to stable, accessible, and affordable housing also face the greatest barriers to voting. Because of stark disparities in voter turnout between low-income renters and high-income homeowners, too many policymakers turn their attention away from the affordable housing crisis and disregard the housing needs of their low-income constituents.

Our Homes, Our Votes is NLIHC's nonpartisan campaign to increase voter participation among low-income renters and to educate candidates about housing solutions. Our Homes, Our Votes aims to close the turnout gap and elevate housing affordability as an election issue. The campaign provides the tools that housing nonprofits, resident leaders, and other advocates need to mobilize low-income voters and engage with candidates.

Raising awareness of your activities is an essential part of any successful voter engagement campaign. Social and traditional media are also important channels to connect with candidates and educate them about your priorities. This media toolkit provides sample content that housing organizations can adapt to inform their networks about housing and elections, to engage with candidates, and to publicize their election work. The toolkit also includes graphics with key data from the Our Homes, Our Votes campaign.

Don't forget to use the hashtag #OurHomesOurVotes22 and tag @OurHomesVotes when posting about your work!

SAMPLE TWEETS

#DYK that only 55% of renters voted in the 2020 elections, compared to 71% of homeowners? #OurHomesOurVotes22 is building a movement to close this gap in 2022! Join us: <https://www.ourhomes-ourvotes.org>

#DYK that 74% of people in the U.S. support building more affordable homes for low-income renters? #OurHomesOurVotes22 is holding candidates accountable to listen to their voters and prioritize housing! Join us: <https://www.ourhomes-ourvotes.org>

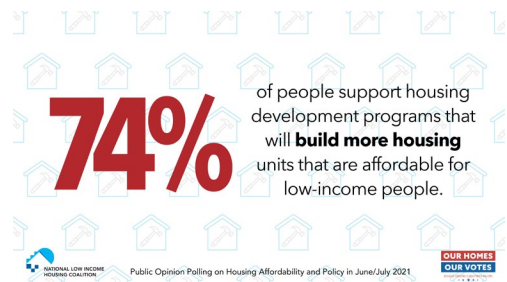
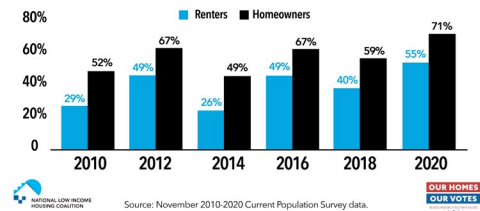
Housing is built with ballots. Don't let candidates ignore your vote. Join #OurHomesOurVotes22 & spread the word about the resources candidates & voters need to advocate for #affordablehomes <https://www.ourhomes-ourvotes.org/>

#DYK that more than 80% of people in the U.S. think the country should be doing more to prevent homelessness? What are candidates in the 2022 midterms doing to address this issue? #OurHomesOurVotes22

#DYK that nearly 9 in 10 people in the U.S. say it's personally important that their elected officials work to make sure there is enough affordable housing available? 2022 candidates should listen to their voters and prioritize housing! #OurHomesOurVotes22 <https://www.ourhomes-ourvotes.org>

#DYK that 76% of the public says it's harder today to find stable housing compared to previous generations? What do the candidates think about issue? #OurHomesOurVotes22

U.S. Citizens Who Reported Voting in National Elections by Housing Tenure (2010-2020)



82% of respondents believe that the United States should be doing more to **prevent homelessness**.



America is stronger and prosperous when we have safe, decent, accessible, and affordable homes & stable communities. We need candidates who will boldly tackle these issues. #OurHomesOurVotes22

In the world's richest nation, we should not have millions struggling to keep roofs over their heads. Housing is built with ballots. Vote! Join #OurHomesOurVotes22 & spread the word about the need for #affordablehomes Get resources at: <https://www.ourhomes-ourvotes.org/>

Having to decide between paying rent & buying food is unacceptable. Elected officials must work to end this crisis. #OurHomesOurVotes22

In 2021, 60% of people in the U.S. say housing affordability is a problem in the area where they live. What will candidates do to fix this crisis? #OurHomesOurVotes22

Nearly 6 in 10 people in the U.S. say the amount they pay for housing is a concern. Candidates must provide solutions to this growing crisis. #OurHomesOurVotes22

89% of the public says it is important to them personally that their elected officials work to make sure there is enough affordable housing available. Housing must be a top priority for candidates in 2022! #OurHomesOurVotes22

No one should have to skimp on food and healthcare to make rent. How are candidates addressing this issue? Check out #OurHomesOurVotes22 & share solutions & resources <https://www.ourhomesourvotes.org/>

Affordable homes are built with ballots every bit as much as they are built with bricks and drywall. #OurHomesOurVotes22

Quality, affordable, accessible housing should be a basic human right for everyone in this country. Without stable shelter, everything else falls apart. #OurHomesOurVotes22

Nearly three-quarters of people in the U.S. support emergency crisis assistance for low-income households if they experience an unexpected hardship. What are candidates saying about this issue? #OurHomesOurVotes22

Source: Opportunity Starts at Home campaign, Public Opinion Polling on Housing Affordability and Policy in June/July 2021, <https://www.opportunityhome.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Tarrance-NLIHC-Poll-Fact-Sheet.pdf>

SOCIAL MEDIA IMAGES & GRAPHICS



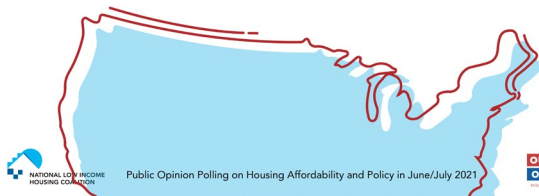
Nearly 9 in 10 respondents (**89%**) said that it was important to them personally that their **elected officials** work to make sure there is enough affordable housing available.



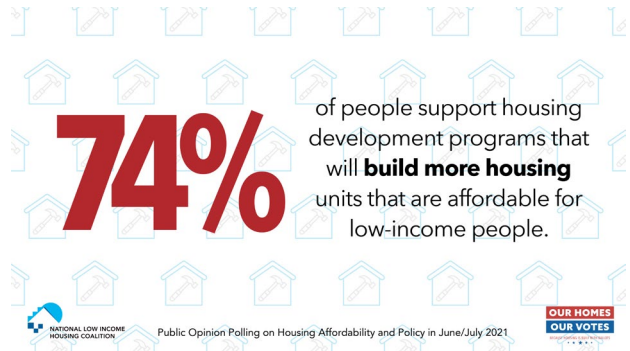
Public Opinion Polling on Housing Affordability and Policy in June/July 2021



82% of respondents believe that the United States should be doing more to **prevent homelessness**.



Public Opinion Polling on Housing Affordability and Policy in June/July 2021



Public Opinion Polling on Housing Affordability and Policy in June/July 2021



Additional shareable graphics and images can be found at: <https://bit.ly/2MVGweC>

Don't tweet? Share sample messages and images on other social media platforms like Facebook and use #OurHomesOurVotes22

Not on Twitter or Facebook? Print out the tools available throughout <https://www.ourhomes-ourvotes.org/> and share them during your next legislative visit, Lobby Day, town hall, or community picnic. Use the time between now and Election Day to get the message out that you vote for more affordable homes!

SAMPLE OP-ED

[470 WORDS]

Across America, millions of families are struggling to find safe, decent, accessible and affordable homes. There are far too many who cannot afford to keep roofs over their heads and who are spending most of their incomes on rent, leaving them few resources for other necessities such as food, medications, and childcare—and in the worst cases, leaving them homeless. The nation's affordable housing crisis is one we as a nation choose to allow or overcome. We have the resources to solve and end homelessness and housing poverty in America.

That's why [Insert organization] is part of Our Homes, Our Votes, a nonpartisan project to raise the nation's dire need for affordable homes in the 2022 elections and to register, educate, and mobilize more low-income renters and affordable housing advocates to vote. Renters, especially low-income renters, are underrepresented among voters. To ensure low-income housing interests are addressed by elected officials, these renters and other low-income people must become engaged in the electoral process.

The affordable housing crisis continues to worsen, making it nearly impossible for seniors, people with disabilities, families with children, and low-wage workers to pay rent and make ends meet. Every state and community in the country—urban, rural, and suburban—is impacted. In [State], there is a shortage of [#] affordable and available homes for extremely low-income renter households—those with incomes at or below the poverty guideline or 30% of area median income. Approximately [#] of these households in [state] are paying more than half of their modest incomes on rent.

[Provide a local example of how residents are impacted by the lack of affordable housing.]

According to a poll commissioned by NLIHC, 82% of respondents believe that the United States should be doing more to prevent homelessness. 74% of people in the U.S. support housing development programs that will build more homes that are affordable for low-income people. Nearly 9 in 10 people in the U.S. say it is important to them personally that their elected officials work to make sure there is enough affordable housing available. Voters want to see action and they want candidates to share their plans to address the crisis: they are asking about housing affordability on the campaign trail all around the country.

[Insert organization] and other partners of the Our Homes, Our Votes project call on all candidates to address how they would preserve and build more affordable homes, increase rental assistance, prevent families from experiencing evictions, protect renters from discrimination and abuse, and end homelessness and housing poverty in America once and for all.

We urge all voters to ask the 2022 candidates: What would you do to make homes affordable for our nation's lowest-income people? And we urge all eligible voters to show up to the polls because housing is built with ballots.

NLIHC Poll: <https://www.opportunityhome.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Tarrance-NLIHC-Poll-Fact-Sheet.pdf>

SAMPLE MEDIA ADVISORY FOR A CANDIDATE EVENT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: [Date]

Media Contact: [contact name, phone number, and email address]

Our Homes, Our Votes: Because Housing is Built with Ballots

Non-partisan project invites candidate [name of candidate] to address the affordable housing crisis

[City, State] - On [date] affordable housing advocates and concerned voters in [city] are participating in [the event you are planning] featuring candidate [name of candidate]. [Organization leading the event] is hosting this event as a partner of the Our Homes, Our Votes project calling on candidates to tell voters what they will do to address the affordable housing crisis facing the nation and [state].

What: [Organization leading the event] has invited 2022 candidate [name of candidate] to [name of event] to discuss [his/her] proposed affordable housing solutions. This event will also provide low-income voters and future voters access to the candidate to ask about what [he/she] will do specifically to ensure greater housing affordability and to end homelessness and housing poverty in America. [If possible/optimal: There will also be an opportunity for residents to register to vote.]

When: [Date and Time]

Where: [Location]

Why: According to a national poll, 74% of people in the U.S. support building more affordable homes for low-income renters, and 82% say that the U.S. must do more to prevent homelessness. 89% of the public says it is important to them personally that their elected officials work to make sure there is enough affordable housing available.

Neither minimum wages nor prevailing renter wages have kept pace with the cost of rental housing. The typical renter in [state] earns [estimated mean renter hourly wage], which is [subtract the mean hourly wage from housing wage] less than the hourly wage needed to afford a modest rental home.

There is currently nowhere in the U.S. where a minimum-wage renter working a 40-hour work week can afford a modest two-bedroom rental home at the average fair market rent. Working at the minimum wage of [state minimum wage] in [state], a wage-earner must work [# full-time jobs at minimum wage] full-time jobs or [# work hours per week at minimum wage] hours per week to afford a modest one-bedroom apartment and must work [# full-time jobs at minimum wage] full-time job(s) or [# work hours per week at minimum wage] hours per week to afford a two-bedroom apartment. But it's not just minimum wages that are insufficient: seven of the ten fastest growing occupations in America do not pay enough to afford a modest one-bedroom apartment.

People should not have to sacrifice other important necessities—like food, medicines, and childcare—in order to pay the rent. Candidates need to prioritize housing affordability in America and tell voters what they will do to ensure it.

NLIHC launched Our Homes, Our Votes, a nonpartisan project to urge candidates to address the affordable housing crisis and its solutions and to engage more low-income renters in voting. NLIHC is working with partners across the country to encourage all candidates to put forward robust solutions to the nation's housing crisis, and [organization] is proud to collaborate with NLIHC in this effort.

We as a nation need to make bold investments and sustained commitment to ensure everyone has a safe, accessible, and affordable home. When we invest in affordable homes, we invest in people, our communities, and America as a whole: affordable homes increase employment, economic growth, health outcomes, educational attainment, and more.

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NLIHC Poll: <https://www.opportunityhome.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Tarrance-NLIHC-Poll-Fact-Sheet.pdf>



For questions contact: May Louis-Juste, mlouis-juste@nlihc.org

Follow [#OurHomesOurVotes22](https://twitter.com/OurHomesOurVotes22)

Twitter: [@OurHomesVotes](https://twitter.com/OurHomesVotes) | Facebook: [@OHOV](https://www.facebook.com/OHOV)

NLIHC has launched the nonpartisan Our Homes, Our Votes voter and candidate engagement project to raise the issue of affordable housing in the 2022 elections, to urge candidates to discuss how they will deal with the crisis, to track their comments and proposals, and to engage more low-income renters in voting.

Learn more at: www.ourhomes-ourvotes.org