

Deploying the Homeowner Assistance Fund: How States Can Get Help to Those Who Need It Most

Speaker Biographies

Meg Burns is the Housing Policy Council's Executive Vice President. In this role, she is responsible for overseeing the association's regulatory policy, government affairs, and membership services. Meg joined HPC as the SVP for Mortgage Policy, managing various regulatory and housing finance policy activities and engaging with federal policymakers. Before joining HPC, Meg was a Partner at a DC-based housing finance advisory firm. Most of Meg's career has been dedicated to federal service. She served as the Senior Associate Director of the Office of Housing and Regulatory Policy at the Federal Housing Finance Agency (FHFA), overseeing the policy activities of the GSEs in conservatorship, including several high-impact projects, like the Servicing Alignment Initiative, redesign of the HARP program, and updating of the GSE representation and warranty models. Meg was also the Director of the Office of Congressional Affairs and Communications at FHFA and the Director for Single Family Program Development at the Federal Housing Administration. Meg holds a bachelor's degree in philosophy from Connecticut College and a master's degree in philosophy and public policy from The George Washington University.

Will Corbett is currently a Senior Policy Advisor at the Treasury Department, working on Emergency Housing Programs. Before joining Treasury, served as Litigation Director for the Center for Responsible Lending, after having been at the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau from 2011 to 2017. Prior to that, help start and was Director of the State Home Foreclosure Prevention Project for North Carolina for the Office of Commissioner of Banks.

Jerusalem Demsas is a policy reporter at Vox.com where she covers housing, urban economics, and other domestic economic policy issues. While at Vox she has published a number of pieces on exclusionary zoning policies at the state and federal levels, a deep dive into why it costs so much to build big things in America, as well as several pieces narrowing in on housing affordability concerns. She has written previously on energy and environment issues for the Center for American Progress and is a graduate of the College of William and Mary where she studied Economics and Government.

Michael Neal is a senior research associate in the Housing Finance Policy Center at the Urban Institute. Previously, he worked at Fannie Mae where he was a director of economics in the Economic and Strategic Research division. Before his service at Fannie, Neal was the assistant vice president at the National Association of Home Builder's Economic and Housing Policy department. As a housing economist, Neal has an in-depth knowledge of housing market trends and has provided expert analysis and commentary on housing to media outlets around the country. Previously, Neal worked at Congress's Joint Economic Committee, the Federal Reserve System, the Congressional Budget Office, and Goldman Sachs. Neal has a bachelor's degree in economics from Morehouse College and a master's degree in public administration from the University of Pennsylvania.

Daniel Pang is a research assistant in the Housing Finance Policy Center at the Urban Institute. Pang graduated magna cum laude from Washington University in Saint Louis with BAs in economics and political science, where his research focused on a hedonic price comparison of manufactured and site-built homes in the US. Before joining Urban, Pang interned in the US Senate and the ACLU of Missouri.

Lisa Sitkin provides technical assistance, training, and practice resources to attorneys representing homeowners in connection with mortgages and foreclosure. Before joining NHLP, Lisa was Managing Attorney at Housing and Economic Rights Advocates in Oakland, CA. Lisa has counseled and represented individual clients, participated in policy advocacy regarding mortgage servicing and foreclosure, and assisted with mortgage servicing, predatory and unfair lending litigation. She has conducted numerous workshops and trainings regarding mortgages, foreclosures, loan modification and foreclosure rescue scams, including programs produced by the Practicing Law Institute and the National Consumer Law Center, and has testified before the California State Legislature and other governmental bodies regarding mortgage servicing and foreclosure issues. She is one of the original drafters of the bill that ultimately became the California Homeowner Bill of Rights.

Shawn Smith serves as Executive Director at the Ohio Housing Finance Agency. Joining the agency in September 2019 as Chief of Staff, he was named Interim Executive Director just ten months later. Shawn accepted a permanent appointment to the position in July of 2021. He has held several other roles in state government, including Chief Operating Officer at the Ohio Facilities Construction Commission, Director of Finance & Technology Services for the Ohio Department of Youth Services, and Chief Financial Officer for the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio. A strong proponent for civic engagement, Shawn has also served his local community as a library trustee for the past six years and was elected as Fiscal Officer in his home township in 2019. His board/committee work includes membership on the Affordable Housing Advisory Council (Federal Home Loan Bank of Cincinnati), the Ohio Attorney General's Criminal Justice and Mental Health Task Force, the Eliminating Disparities in Infant Mortality Task Force, the State of Ohio 9-1-1 Council, the Ohio Utility Radiological Safety Board, the Central Ohio Association of Government Accountants Executive Committee, and the Central Ohio YMCA Finance Committee. Shawn is a Certified Government Financial Manager, Certified Public Manager, and Certified Ohio Fiscal Professional. He holds a Bachelor's degree in Accounting, summa cum laude, and a Master of Accountancy degree from Rutgers University.

John Walsh is a research analyst in the Housing Finance Policy Center at the Urban Institute. Before joining Urban, he interned with the US Department of Housing and Urban Development in the financial management division. Walsh graduated from Indiana University's School of Public and Environmental Affairs with a degree in policy analysis, a minor in economics, and a certificate in applied research and inquiry. As a senior, he coauthored his thesis on the Community Reinvestment Act and its impact on mortgage outcomes during the 2008 economic recession.

Tony Walters serves as the Executive Director for the National American Indian Housing Council, which is a DC-based non-profit that serves tribal housing programs across the country. NAIHC serves as a lead advocate to Congress and Federal Partners for all tribal housing issues. NAIHC also serves as a lead training and technical assistance provider to tribal housing programs through a mix of federal grants, internal Indian housing professional curricula, and our Native-focused homebuyer counseling program, Pathways Home. Tony is from Tahlequah, Oklahoma and is a member of the Cherokee Nation. He has served in Washington, DC since 2010 in the legislative and executive branches of government, and now the non-profit sector. Tony most recently served as Staff Director and Chief Counsel to Senator Tester for the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs. Prior to that he worked as a policy advisor in the Department of the Interior's Office of the Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs. Tony has worked on a wide range of tribal

issues, including energy and economic development, law enforcement, tribal lands issues, and DOI's Land Buy-Back Program. Accordingly he has a strong background in advocacy and Indian law and policy. His education includes a Bachelor of Science degree in neuroscience from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and a Juris Doctor degree from the Oklahoma University College of Law.

Stockton Williams was appointed Executive Director in March 2018. He leads NCSHA's wide-ranging efforts to advocate and strengthen the central role of state housing finance agencies in the nation's housing system. Stockton has held senior leadership positions in the private, public, and nonprofit sectors throughout a career dedicated to expanding housing opportunity. He has been an advisor to local communities across the U.S., an author of original research, and a commentator in the media on real estate and economic development issues. Stockton was previously Executive Vice President of Content and Executive Director of the Terwilliger Center for Housing at the Urban Land Institute (ULI). Before that he was Managing Principal of HR&A Advisors' Washington, D.C., office. Stockton previously served as Senior Advisor in the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and the U.S. Department of Energy. He has also held senior leadership positions at Enterprise Community Partners, Living Cities, and with an affordable housing developer. Stockton earned a master's degree in real estate development from Columbia University and a bachelor's degree in religion from Princeton University.