



News Release

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NAIHC Board Chairman Urges Housing Reauthorization

WASHINGTON, D.C. – National American Indian Housing Council (NAIHC) Chairman Marty Shuravloff, in testimony before the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, urged the Committee to reauthorize the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act (NAHASDA) “because it directly affects our health and welfare.” Shuravloff also thanked the Committee during his testimony, citing several changes in a NAHASDA discussion draft that would “enhance and further Indian self-determination in NAHASDA.”

NAIHC has been an integral force for beneficial change in Indian housing. In the early 1990s, Indian tribes, housing authorities and others came together to share their vision of how Indian Self-Determination should influence housing and related community development.

The NAIHC was instrumental in shaping these discussions and in helping to draft NAHASDA, first enacted in 1996 and reauthorized in 2002, to encourage tribes to administer their housing programs according to the unique and local circumstances of each Indian Nation. Shuravloff noted that the tradition of local decision-making and self-determination would continue under the draft legislation by noting that the Committee’s support is focused on “what this law means to Native people—providing desperately needed tools to our communities so we can continue to improve the housing conditions that our people face every day.”

Shuravloff concluded his testimony by asking the Committee to “amend, extend, and reauthorize NAHASDA to address the daunting housing challenges facing Indian tribes and people. As an Alaska Native, I am all-too-aware of the significant effects on tribal communities from inadequate and unsafe housing. Dilapidated houses lead to weak performance in school, poor health, and contribute to a hopelessness that few Americans witness as part of their daily lives.”

Tribal leaders and tribal housing officials from four other tribes also testified at today’s hearing. David Brien, Tribal Chairman for the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians in North Dakota noted that the “Act has been very important in allowing the Tribes considerable self-determination in providing housing for its low-income members.” Brien cautioned, however, that “no significant increase in the funding level” had occurred and that “this must be corrected.”

Aneva J. Yazzie, Chief Executive Officer from the Navajo Nation Housing Authority, Chairman Waldo Walker of the Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California, and Teri Nutter, Executive Director of the Copper River Basin Regional Housing Authority in Alaska, also testified and agreed that the timely reauthorization of NAHASDA is critical if the housing conditions for American Indians and Alaska Natives are to improve.

For more information on this hearing or other housing news, please visit www.naihc.net.

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The National American Indian Housing Council assists tribes and tribal housing entities reach their goal of providing culturally relevant, decent, safe, sanitary, and quality affordable housing for Native people in Indian communities and Alaska Native villages. “A Tradition of Native American Housing.”



Marty Shuravloff - NAIHC Chairman, Teri Nutter - Executive Director Copper River Basin Housing Authority, Sen. Lisa Murkowski (Alaska) - Vice Chair Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, Sen. John Barrasso (Wyoming)