



# FEDERAL POLICY PROJECT

## Federal Policy Project Staff

Marilyn Wacks  
Housing Policy Manager  
Ph: (415) 433-6804 x13  
Email:  
[mwacks@chpc.net](mailto:mwacks@chpc.net)

Matt Schwartz  
President  
Ph: (415) 433-6804 x11  
Email:  
[mschwartz@chpc.net](mailto:mschwartz@chpc.net)

### FPP Partners

California Housing Authority Association (CHAA)

California Coalition for Rural Housing (CCRH)

Housing Authority Association of Southern California (HAASC)

Housing California

Los Angeles Coalition to End Hunger and Homelessness

NAHRO Northern and Southern California Chapters

NonProfit Housing Association of Northern California (NPH)

Northern California Nevada Executive Directors' Association

Southern California Association of Nonprofit Housing (SCANPH)

The San Diego Housing Federation

## Section 8 Voucher Reform Act: Letter of Support to Congresswoman Maxine Waters

Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers are the leading form of rental housing assistance in California, serving more than 300,000 low-income families with children, seniors, and the disabled. The Section 8 Voucher Reform Act of 2009 (SEVRA) would make significant improvements to the program for the first time in ten years so that it continues to serve low-income Californians while using our federal resources more efficiently.

**SEVRA proposes a very important change to the voucher program that will benefit not only extremely low income Californians, but also our housing authorities and developers of affordable rental homes. SEVRA increases the percentage of each housing authority's budget that can be used to project-base vouchers from a base level of 20% to 25% and would grant a further 5% increase for supportive housing developments. The project-based voucher program has proven itself to be one of California's most powerful financial tools for the creation and preservation of affordable homes serving extremely low income households.**

Similar legislation passed the House of Representatives in 2007 but was never brought to a vote in the Senate. Yesterday the House financial Services Committee held a preliminary legislative hearing on the Section 8 Voucher Reform Act of 2009. The bill is scheduled to be re-introduced the week of June 1.

With this important legislation coming up very soon for discussion and debate, we plan to send a letter to the legislative sponsor, Congresswoman Maxine Waters, Chairwoman of the House Financial Services Subcommittee on Housing and Community Opportunity. We believe it's important to express our appreciation of and strong support for her leadership of the Section 8 Voucher Reform Act. Please join the California Housing Partnership and the Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles in signing on to the letter below.

***To sign on, send an email to CHPC Housing Policy Manager, Marilyn Wacks at: <mailto:mwacks@chpc.net>. Please include the name of your organization, your name, title, and contact information.***

May 22, 2009

The Honorable Maxine Waters  
Chair, Subcommittee on Housing & Community Opportunity  
Rayburn House Office Building 2344  
Washington, DC 20515

Re: Support for the Section Eight Voucher Reform Act (SEVRA) of 2009

Dear Chairwoman Waters:

The undersigned organizations are all active in creating and preserving affordable homes for low income Californians. We are writing you to express our support for the re-introduction of the Section Eight Voucher Reform Act (SEVRA) and our appreciation for your leadership role in authoring and moving this important bill.

We support SEVRA because it offers:

- **A clear, permanent funding policy** to restore stability to the voucher program, which has experienced many financial shocks in recent years.
- **Simplified rent rules for all the federally assisted rental programs** that are easier to understand and implement.
- **Incentives to produce more housing** through improvements to the project-based voucher program.
- **New tools for improving housing conditions** and promoting family stability.

While we strongly support SEVRA, we also ask that you make the following change to the draft bill:

Enable public housing to be converted to project-based voucher authority to facilitate one-for-one replacement by making changes to Section 8(o)(13) in SEVRA. This is a change in voucher policy that is appropriate to include in this bill and is needed as soon as possible to prevent the loss of additional housing units in California and other areas. Californians cannot afford to wait the years it will likely take for Congress to approve comprehensive public housing reform legislation. We need this tool now to avoid the further loss of rental homes that serve California's lowest income families.

Thank you again for your extraordinary leadership in improving the Voucher program.

Sincerely,

Matt Schwartz, President, California Housing Partnership Corporation  
Rudy Montiel, Executive Director, Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles

## HOW DO I GET INVOLVED?

The Federal Policy Project is a coalition of California housing authorities, nonprofit housing developers, local government housing agencies and tenant advocates working to increase understanding for the need for increased federal investment in the creation and preservation of affordable homes for lower income households. To learn more, please contact our Housing Policy Manager, Marilyn Wacks at [mwacks@chpc.net](mailto:mwacks@chpc.net) or 415-433-6804x313.