



NATIONAL RURAL HOUSING COALITION



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House Subcommittee Hearing, NRHC Launches Petition

House Subcommittee Hearing on FY15 Rural Development Budget

This morning, USDA's Acting Under Secretary of Rural Development, Doug O'Brien, and new Rural Housing Administrator, Tony Hernandez, testified before the House Appropriations Subcommittee on the Administration's FY15 Rural Development Budget. Despite the topic at hand, Mr. O'Brien spent half of his [opening statement](#) (4 of 8 pages) discussing local and regional food systems and the bio-economy and only 2 paragraphs on Rural Housing programs.

Full Committee Chairman Rogers, on the other hand, discussed these critical programs in great detail and expressing concern about the President's Section 502 Direct and Section 523 Mutual Self-Help Housing budgets. "We know the game the administration is playing: cut funding for useful programs in order to make room for new spending and create the illusion of budget savings." In addition, he highlighted the significant work that NRHC Members Kentucky Highlands, FAHE, and Frontier Housing have done in his district and even

pointed to a some touching success stories of families who have been helped through these programs. You can [read the full statement here](#).

Subcommittee [Chairman Aderholt](#) and Reps. Fortenberry, Valadao, and DeLauro asked about cuts to Rural Housing programs--including Farmworker Housing, Section 502 Direct, and Self-Help Housing--and the agency's proposed language regarding the Rental Assistance program. In addition, Rep. Valadao highlighted NRHC Board Member Peter Carey of Self-Help Enterprises by name, recognizing his impressive work in California.

Mr. O'Brien and Mr. Hernandez reiterated the arguments they made before the NRHC Board of Directors last week about budget constraints, higher subsidy rates, and the need to improve efficiency.

NRHC's Petition: 3 Easy Ways You Can Support Rural Housing

Yesterday, NRHC launched a petition, asking Congress to protect rural communities from the budget cuts proposed in the President's FY15 Budget Request and to fully fund Rural Housing programs.

We hope that you'll take a moment to [sign the petition and to help us get as many signatures as possible](#).

Here are 3 easy ways that you can help!

1. **Share the petition with organizations and individuals that you work with** - Remember, organizations that serve on your Board of Directors or participate in similar networks, local businesses, lenders, and partners, and even your local government can sign on!
2. **Share the petition through social media** - Post it on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and other social media sites and ask others to do the same. Are there local news sources, blogs, or mailing lists that can help bring attention to the petition?
3. **Share the petition with your friends and family** - Please feel free to share this petition at church groups and civic organizations, and with your neighbors and friends.

This year alone, the Administration proposes an additional \$270 million in reductions. If enacted, the President's budget would amount to a 57 percent cut in funding for Rural Housing and Community Development since 2010. **The petition closes on Monday, April 14th.**

Thank you for your support,

Sarah Mickelson

