



# Federal Housing Funding Update

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*October 21<sup>st</sup>, 2021*

*Senate Committee on Finance*

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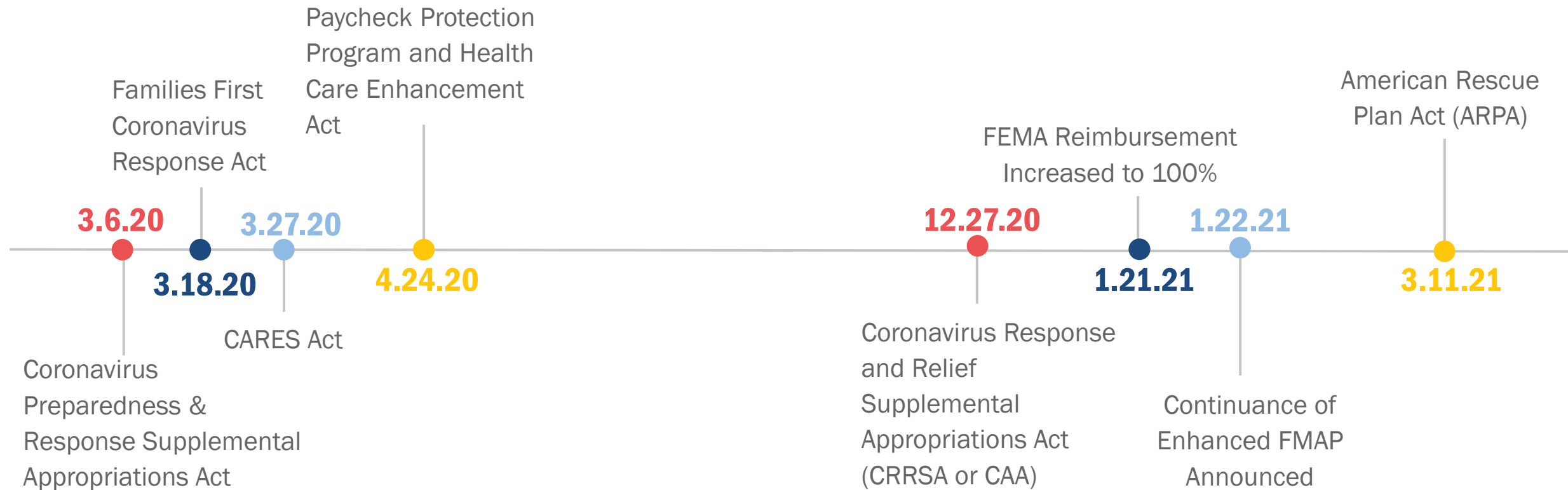
# Agenda

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- Introduction/Background
- Discussion of Existing Funding Opportunities
  - CARES Act
  - CRRSA
  - ARPA
  - FEMA
- FY22 Budget Initiatives
- SFRF Eligibility for Housing Initiatives
  - Compliance and eligibility
  - Performance measures
- Governor's Down Payment Proposals

# COVID-19 Relief Legislation Timeline

Congress has passed laws making additional federal funds available to states to address the COVID-19 pandemic. These funds are in addition to the typical federal funds that states receive. They are also in addition to Stafford Act reimbursement for eligible disaster-related costs.



# Varying Degrees of State Control for Federal Awards

ARPA and other stimulus awards range from relatively flexible to highly structured

High State Control

Little/No State Control



Stimulus Awards

Direct Awards to State Agencies

Pass-through Funds

Awards to Non-State Entities

e.g. SFRF, CRF

CDC Grants to RIDOH

ESSER, Local Recovery Funds

Grants directly to quasis or community providers, no state involvement

# Overview of COVID-19 Stimulus Federal Housing Funding

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# COVID-19 Housing Overview - \$507.6 awarded

Stimulus Bill	Grant Name	Award Amount	Planned Expenditures	Expenses + Encumbrances*	Planned Exp. Remaining	Award Remaining
FEMA	FEMA	\$17.2M	\$17.2M	\$9.6M	\$7.6M	-
		<b>\$17.2M</b>	<b>\$17.2M</b>	<b>\$9.6M</b>	<b>\$7.6M</b>	-
CARES Act	Coronavirus Relief Fund	\$17.2M	\$17.2M	\$15.9M	\$1.3M	\$1.3M
	Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)	\$11.5M	\$11.3M	\$0.3M	\$11.1M	\$11.2M
	LIHEAP	\$5.9M	\$5.9M	\$5.9M	(\$0.0M)	(\$0.0M)
	ESG	\$5.8M	\$5.8M	\$2.1M	\$3.6M	\$3.6M
	Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA)	\$0.2M	\$0.2M	\$0.2M	\$0.0M	\$0.0M
	Fair Housing Assistance Program	\$0.0M	\$0.0M	\$0.0M	-	\$0.0M
		<b>\$40.5M</b>	<b>\$40.2M</b>	<b>\$24.3M</b>	<b>\$15.9M</b>	<b>\$16.2M</b>
Consolidated Appropriations Act	Emergency Rental Assistance	\$200.0M	\$200.0M	\$19.0M	\$181.0M	\$181.0M
	Low Income Home Water Assistance Program - LIHWAP	\$2.0M	\$2.0M		\$2.0M	\$2.0M
		<b>\$202.0M</b>	<b>\$202.0M</b>	<b>\$19.0M</b>	<b>\$183.0M</b>	<b>\$183.0M</b>
American Rescue Plan Act	Emergency Rental Assistance	\$152.0M	\$152.0M	\$1.0M	\$151.0M	\$151.0M
	Homeowner Assistance Fund	\$50.0M	\$50.0M		\$50.0M	\$50.0M
	LIHEAP	\$30.8M				\$30.8M
	HOME Investment Partnerships Program - Non-entitlement	\$13.5M				\$13.5M
	Low Income Home Water Assistance Program - LIHWAP	\$1.6M	\$1.6M		\$1.6M	\$1.6M
	<b>\$247.9M</b>	<b>\$203.6M</b>	<b>\$1.0M</b>	<b>\$202.6M</b>	<b>\$246.9M</b>	

\*Expenditure and encumbrance data is as of 8/31/2021

# Housing: Planned Expenditure Initiative Inventory



# Housing: Planned Expenditure Initiative Inventory

Area of Spend	ARP	CAA	CARES	FEMA	Total
Rent Relief	\$152.0M	\$200.0M			\$352.0M
Homeowner Assistance	\$50.0M				\$50.0M
Housing & Homeless Supports			\$17.0M		\$17.0M
Eviction Diversion Program			\$13.6M		\$13.6M
Homeless Supports			\$0.0M		\$0.0M
Low-Income Utility Assistance	\$1.6M	\$2.0M	\$5.9M		\$9.4M
Temporary Non-Congregate Sheltering / Q&I			\$1.5M		\$1.5M
Temporary Non-Congregate Homeless Sheltering, Q&I, Homeless Supports				\$17.2M	\$17.2M
Property Acquisition and Pre-Development			\$1.7M		\$1.7M
Housing			\$0.3M		\$0.3M
Fair Housing			\$0.2M		\$0.2M
<b>Total Planned Expenditures</b>	<b>\$203.6M</b>	<b>\$202.0M</b>	<b>\$40.2M</b>	<b>\$17.2M</b>	<b>\$463.0M</b>



# Funds Committed

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# Coronavirus Relief Funds (CARES) - \$17.2M

Area of Spend	Planned Expenditures	Expenses	Planned Exp. Remaining
Eviction Diversion Program / Legal Services	\$13.6M	\$12.6M	\$1.1M*
Property Acquisition and Pre-Development	\$1.7M	\$1.6M	\$0.1M
Temporary Non-Congregate Sheltering / Q&I	\$1.5M	\$1.5M	-
Housing	\$0.3M	\$0.2M	\$0.1M
Homeless Supports	\$0.0M	\$0.0M	\$0.0M
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$17.2M</b>	<b>\$15.9M</b>	<b>\$1.3M</b>

## Eligible Uses

- Addressing the effects of COVID-19 broadly defined

## Significant Planned Uses of Funds

- \$13.6M:** Eviction Diversion program/legal services
- \$1.7M:** Property Acquisition / Pre-Development Initiative
- \$0.8M:** Shelter Reduction Program
- \$0.7M:** Non-Congregate Sheltering / Q&I
- \$0.3M:** Landlord Incentive Program

## Fund Expiration Date

- Funds expended on or before December 31, 2021.
- Period of performance ends on December 31, 2021.

\*Remaining planned expenditures is pending final reconciliation of vendor costs.

# Community Development Block Grant (CARES) - \$11.3M

Area of Spend	Planned Expenditures	Expenses	Planned Exp. Remaining
Housing & Homeless Supports	\$11.3M	\$0.3M	\$11.1M
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$11.3M</b>	<b>\$0.3M</b>	<b>\$11.1M</b>

## Eligible Uses

- Standard CDBG eligible expenses that respond to direct and indirect effects of COVID-19
  - Public services and assistance
  - Economic development and microenterprise assistance
  - Improvements to public facilities
  - Rehabilitation of private buildings to provide housing
- CARES CDBG has no limit on public services

## Significant Planned Uses of Funds

- **\$4.8M:** Basic Needs
- **\$3.0M:** Homeless Shelters / Hotels
- **\$1.5M:** Broadband
- **\$1.2M:** Housing and Landlord Incentive
- **\$0.8M:** Administration

## Fund Expiration Date

- March 1, 2026

# Comparative Summary of Renter / Homeowner Assistance

Assistance Program	Rent Payments	Mortgage Payments	Utility Payments	Housing Stability	Weatherization	Who is Eligible	Expires
Emergency Rental Assistance 1	✓		✓	✓		Renters/ Landlords	9/30/22
Emergency Rental Assistance 2	✓		✓	✓		Renters/ Landlords	9/30/25
Homeowners Assistance Fund		✓	✓	✓		Homeowners	9/30/26
Low-income Heating Assistance			✓		✓	Renters Homeowners	9/30/21 & 9/30/22
Low-income Water Assistance			✓			Renters Homeowners	9/30/23

# Emergency Rental Assistance 1 (CRRSA) - \$200M

Area of Spend	Planned Expenditures	Expenses	Planned Exp. Remaining
Rent Relief	\$200.0M	\$19.0M*	\$181.0M
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$200.0M</b>	<b>\$19.0M</b>	<b>\$181.0M</b>

### Eligible Uses

- Impacted by COVID-19
- To assist renters:
  - Avoid eviction
  - Payment of rent and utilities
  - Other housing supports
- No more than 10% on administrative expenses

### Significant Planned Uses of Funds

- **\$187.9M** Rent/Utility Relief
- **\$12.1M:** Rent Relief – Administrative Costs (shared with ERA 2)

### Fund Expiration Date

- September 30, 2022

\*\$19.0M reflects funds advanced to RI Housing as of 8/31/2021; As of 9/30/2021 RI Housing Reports obligations of \$50.7M and to-date \$74.5M has been advanced to RI Housing.

# Emergency Rental Assistance

## Small State Minimums

- Funding under both ERA 1 and ERA 2 is distributed to states based on the state’s proportional rate of the total U.S. population according to 2019 Census data, EXCEPT that states with small populations were assured a minimum initial disbursement subject to recapture
- The idea behind the small state minimum is not to guarantee that each small state will receive the minimum but rather to ensure that funding is set aside for each small state in case experience showed a need greater than the per capita formula provided

Small State ERA 1 Expenditure Ratios as of August 2021 Treasury Report	
New Hampshire: 21%	Delaware: 8%
Montana: 10%	South Dakota: 3%
Vermont: 10%	North Dakota: 3%
Rhode Island 9%	Wyoming: 2%

**NOTE: National September data are not available. However, as of September 30th, Rhode Island's Expenditure Ratio was 28% up from the 9% reported in the prior month**

# Treasury Guidance on ERA1 Recapture

If a grantee has obligated less than 65 percent of its allocation by September 30, 2021, it is required to submit a program self-assessment and improvement plan for Treasury's approval by November 15<sup>th</sup>.

- A Grantee whose Expenditure Ratio is below 30% for the First Assessment (\$54M for RI) will be considered to have excess funds
- On September 30, RI had obligated \$50.7M (28.2%)
- For the first assessment only: If a grantee did not meet the 30 percent minimum expenditure ratio as of September 30 but is able to meet that **minimum expenditure ratio by November 15th**, Treasury will not recapture funding
- Treasury will conduct a final spending assessment of each program during March 2022.
- Grantees are permitted to reallocate funds only to other ERA Grantees within the State that have obligated at least 65% of their allocation.

# National Grid / Utility Assistance

- Payment of \$16M was made to National Grid on September 30.
- Online form to capture household data went live October 8
- Coordinated communication efforts from RentReliefRI and National Grid:
  - National Grid auto call to customers on 10/19
  - RI Housing e-mail on to National Grid customers on 10/20
  - National Grid e-mail to customers on 10/22
  - National Grid letter to customers on 10/26
- As account holders register for the program, Grid will use the RentRelief payment to credit their accounts
- RentReliefRI has 6 months to capture household data (March 30 or April 11th end of 6-month period)
- Winter utility moratorium begins November 1, 2021, and runs through April 15, 2022
  - RIHousing is concerned that the moratorium, in addition to the dollars being credited to past due accounts, will severely depress willingness and urgency to provide RentReliefRI documentation



# Emergency Rental Assistance 2 (ARPA) - \$152.0M

Area of Spend	Planned Expenditures	Expenses	Planned Exp. Remaining
Rent Relief	\$152.0M	\$1.0M*	\$151.0M
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$152.0M</b>	<b>\$1.0M</b>	<b>\$151.0M</b>

Per Treasury rules, only \$60.8M has been distributed to date (see next slide)

Eligible Uses	Significant Planned Uses of Funds	Fund Expiration Date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expands on ERA 1 for funding rent and utilities to those impacted during pandemic</li> <li>To assist renters:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Avoid eviction</li> <li>Payment of rent and utilities</li> <li>Other housing supports</li> </ul> </li> <li>No more than 15% on administrative expenses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>\$152M:</b> Rent Relief/Utility Relief**</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>September 30, 2025</li> </ul>

\*\$1.0M reflects funds advanced to RI Housing as of 8/31/2021; As of 9/30/2021 RI Housing Reports obligations of \$0.9M

\*\* ERA 1 \$12.1M admin budget is also used to manage the ERA 2 fund. Each fund's share of admin expenses are determined based on an allocation of total relief payments

# Treasury Guidance on ERA2 Disbursement of Tranche 2

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- RI received an initial disbursement of \$60.8M (40% of total) of ERA 2 funding from U.S. Treasury in May 2021.
- In order to receive the remaining 60%, RI must obligate at least \$45.6M (75% of initial disbursement).
- After 10/1/2022, once RI has obligated at least \$114M (75% of its total allocation from Treasury) it can obligate the remaining funding to a broader array of housing and eviction prevention programs, creating an additional incentive to expend at least 75% of ERA 2 allocation.
- This statutory provision is distinct from Treasury's authority to reallocate unpaid ERA 2 funding after 3/31/2022. Treasury clarified in its ERA 1 recapture guidance that it will issue guidance on ERA 2 recapture in spring 2022.

# ERA 1 & 2 Program Status *(As of 10/21/2021)*

Accounts Created	Approved	Denied	Reason for Denial	
14,178	\$44,770,438	\$13,822,382	Applicant Non-Responsive	1,998
Incomplete Applications	In-Process		Withdrawn	567
6,423	\$37,005,233		Other	245
Submitted Applications	Direct Payment to NGrid*		Over Income or Not Eligible	119
7,755	\$16,049,398			
Total Approved Applications				
5,913				

# Homeowner Assistance Fund (ARPA) - \$50M

Area of Spend	Planned Expenditures	Expenses	Planned Exp. Remaining
Homeowner Assistance	\$50.0M	\$0.0M	\$50.0M
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$50.0M</b>	<b>\$0.0M</b>	<b>\$50.0M</b>

## Eligible Uses

- Mortgage payment assistance, mortgage reinstatement, mortgage principal reduction, mortgage interest rate reductions
- Utilities and insurance, payment of delinquent property taxes, home repairs
- Counseling and legal services and planning, community engagement, needs assessment
- Administrative exp not to exceed 15%

## Significant Planned Uses of Funds

- **\$50M:** Homeowner Assistance\*
- \* RI is waiting on Treasury approval of its plan before funds can begin to be distributed.

## Fund Expiration Date

- September 30, 2026

# Supplemental Utility Support (Various) - \$9.4M

Area of Spend	Planned Expenditures	Expenses	Planned Exp. Remaining
Low-Income Home Energy Assistance (CARES)	\$5.9M	\$5.9M	\$0.0M
Low-Income Home Water Assistance (CAA)	\$2.0M	\$0.0M	\$2.0M
Low-Income Home Water Assistance (ARP)	\$1.6M	\$0.0M	\$1.6M
Low-Income Home Energy Assistance (ARP)	\$0.0M	\$0.0M	\$0.0M
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$9.4M</b>	<b>\$5.9M</b>	<b>\$3.6M</b>

## Eligible Uses

- Renters and Homeowners are eligible
- Utility assistance payments (water, heating, electric)
- Weatherization

## Significant Planned Uses of Funds

- **\$9.4M:** Low-Income Utility Assistance

## Fund Expiration Date

- LIHEAP (CARES) – 9/30/2021
- LIHWAP (CAA) – 9/30/2023
- LIHEAP (ARP) – 9/30/2022
- LIHWAP (ARP) – 9/30/2023

# FEMA - \$17.2M

Area of Spend	Planned Expenditures	Expenses	Planned Exp. Remaining
Temporary Non-Congregate Homeless Sheltering, Q&I, Homeless Supports	\$17.2M	\$9.6M	\$7.6M
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$17.2M</b>	<b>\$9.6M</b>	<b>\$7.6M</b>

### Eligible Uses

- Non-congregate sheltering

### Significant Planned Uses of Funds

- **\$8.4M:** Temporary Hotel Shelter (Homeless)
- **\$7.8M:** High Density Community Hotels & Temp Homeless Housing & Q&I
- **\$1.0M:** Homeless Response Efforts

### Fund Expiration Date

- 12/31/2021 (end of 100% FEMA funding)

# Other Grants (Various) - \$6.0M

Area of Spend	Planned Expenditures	Expenses	Planned Exp. Remaining
Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG)	\$5.8M	\$2.1M	\$3.6M
Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA)	\$0.2M	\$0.2M	\$0.0M
Fair Housing Assistance Program	\$0.0M	\$0.0M	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$6.0M</b>	<b>\$2.3M</b>	<b>\$3.7M</b>

## Eligible Uses

- ESG – homeless assistance/prevention activities to mitigate impacts of COVID-19
- HOPWA - Supplemental HOPWA grant to provide additional COVID-related services to HOPWA eligible households
- Fair Housing Assistance Program – Education and Outreach and Technology Acquisition

## Significant Planned Uses of Funds

- **\$5.8M:** Housing & Homeless Supports

## Fund Expiration Date

- ESG – 9/30/2022
- HOPWA – 9/30/2022
- Fair Housing Assistance Program – 9/30/2021

# Home Investment Partnership (ARPA) - \$13.5M

Area of Spend	Planned Expenditures	Expenses	Planned Exp. Remaining
HOME-ARP Non-Entitlement	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	-	-	-

## Eligible Uses

- Administered through the existing HOME Program to support individuals and families who are homeless, at risk of homelessness, or in other vulnerable populations
  - Development and support of affordable housing
  - Tenant based rental assistance
  - Supportive services
  - Acquisition and development of non-congregate shelter units

## Significant Planned Uses of Funds

- These funds require a significant public engagement process which is on-going to plan their use

## Fund Expiration Date

- September 30, 2030



# FY22 Housing Initiatives

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# FY 2022 Housing Initiatives

## The enacted FY 2022 Budget included substantial investments in housing across several programs and initiatives

- **Deputy Secretary of Commerce and Housing**
  - The enacted FY 2022 Budget created a Deputy Secretary of Commerce and Housing position responsible for overseeing all housing initiatives and coordinating agencies directly related to housing
- **Housing Production Fund**
  - The enacted FY 2022 Budget also included \$25.0M from general revenue to capitalize the fund, and additionally modifies the Real Estate Conveyance Tax by creating a second tax tier applied only to residential properties valued over \$800,000 of \$4.60 per \$500, effective January 1, 2022
- **Pay for Success**
  - Five-year pilot program whereby EOHHS contracts with non-profit investors and service providers to provide permanent supportive housing and additional wraparound services to a cohort of 125 individuals experiencing homelessness. The budget assumes \$6.0 million from general revenue to capitalize a restricted receipt fund and authorizes FY 2022 expenditures up to \$1.5 million from that account if certain contracted metrics are achieved.
- **Recovery Housing Expansion for Alcohol Use Disorder**
  - \$0.8M to support costs of funding recovery housing for people with alcohol use disorder and supportive housing programs. Dedicated funds to support core housing programs, particularly those where there is a demonstrated need or significant shortages, including recovery housing and vouchers for people with history of SUD at risk of returning to use. Last federal fiscal year, SOR grant (State Opioid Response) updated their guidance from being able to cover expenses related to all substance abuse disorder to specifically opioids and other stimulants (not alcohol).

# Affordable Housing Bonds

## Brief review of the most recent housing bonds in Rhode Island

Rhode Island G.O. Affordable Housing Bonds (2016 – To Date)			
Public Laws	Amount	Timetable	Description
P.L. 2016 Ch. 142	\$50M	2017 - 2023	\$40M to the BHRI program for production and preservation of long-term affordable homes, \$10M to the Acquisition and Revitalization program for revitalization of residential, commercial, and public space.
P.L. 2020 Ch. 80	\$65M	2021 - 2026	Funds to increase availability of affordable housing, through redevelopment and property acquisition

**P.L. 2020 Ch. 80** authorized \$65M to be used to increase the availability of affordable housing and support community revitalization through the redevelopment of existing structures, new construction, and property acquisition. Construction of affordable housing is expected to commence as early as 2021 and to be completed by 2026.

- Of this amount, \$50M is anticipated to be used in the Building Homes Rhode Island (BHRI) program
- \$15M is anticipated to be allocated towards projects for community revitalization

# Housing Bonds – State Comparisons

How Rhode Island's recent G.O. affordable housing bonds compare to housing bonds passed in nearby and neighboring states. Rhode Island's most recent \$65M housing bond, P.L. 2020 Ch. 80, represents \$62 on a per capita basis.

Massachusetts	Maine	Connecticut
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 2018 \$1.8B housing bond</li><li>• \$400M allocated to the state's affordable housing trust fund, \$600M allocated to public housing projects</li><li>• Represented \$262 per capita in 2018</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 2015 \$15M housing bond</li><li>• Authorized for housing construction projects <i>specifically</i> for low-income seniors</li><li>• Represented \$11 per capita in 2015</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 2022 \$155M housing bonds &amp; 2023 \$150M housing bonds</li><li>• \$105M for the Connecticut Housing Trust Fund (across FY 22 - FY 23) \$200M for the Affordable Housing Flex Fund (across FY 22 - FY 23)</li><li>• Bonds represented \$43 per capita in 2022, \$42 per capita in 2023</li></ul>

# State & Local Fiscal Recovery Fund: Eligibility for Housing Initiatives

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# State & Local Fiscal Recovery Fund: Housing Support and Household Assistance

## Eligible education expenses under Services for Disproportionately Impacted Communities, Negative Economic Impact

As outlined in the Interim Final Rule, State Fiscal Recovery Fund dollars can be used to provide housing support for disproportionately impacted communities, and household assistance to pay for rent, mortgage payments, and utility payments.

### Housing Support:

- Services to address homelessness such as supportive housing, and to improve access to stable, affordable housing among unhoused individuals;
- Affordable housing development to increase supply of affordable and high-quality living units; and
- Housing vouchers, residential counseling, or housing navigation assistance to facilitate household moves to neighborhoods with high levels of economic opportunity and mobility for low-income residents, to help residents increase their economic opportunity and reduce concentrated areas of low economic opportunity.
- Services in Qualified Census Tracts (QCT) are presumed eligible.

### Household Assistance:

- SFRF can be utilized to provide rent, mortgage, and utility assistance to households or populations facing negative economic impacts due to COVID-19 is also an eligible use. **However**, this eligibility category overlaps with other funding sources identified in previous slides (ERA 1, ERA 2, Homeowner's Assistance Fund, etc.)

# SLFRF: Housing Support and Household Assistance Performance Metrics

## Internal/state metrics, and U.S. Treasury metrics

### State metrics

U.S. Treasury requires all projects funded with State or Local Fiscal Recovery Fund dollars to report internally-derived key performance metrics (to be reported quarterly).

Performance indicators should include both output and outcome measures. Output measures, such as number of students enrolled in an early learning program, provide valuable information about the early implementation stages of a project. Outcome measures, such as the percent of students reading on grade level, provide information about whether a project is achieving its overall goals.

### U.S. Treasury metrics

U.S. Treasury also requires its own performance metrics based on the Expenditure Category assigned to each agency project by the Pandemic Recovery Office. For the **Household Assistance and Housing Support categories**, Treasury requires:

- Number of people or households receiving eviction prevention services (including legal representation)
- Number of affordable housing units preserved or developed that all projects report

Treasury also encourages recipients to provide data disaggregated by race, ethnicity, gender, income, and other relevant factors.

# Down Payment

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# SFRF Down Payment Plan - Housing

2021-H-6494 appropriates \$29.5M for housing initiatives that will assist vulnerable families in maintaining housing stability

Initiative	FY 22 Amount
Development of Affordable Housing	\$15M
Site Acquisition Program	\$12M
Housing Stability	\$1.5M
Affordable Housing Capacity	\$0.5M
Broadband Infrastructure	\$0.5M
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$29.5M</b>

# Development of Affordable Housing

## \$15M for the purpose of incentivizing the development of affordable housing in the state

- These funds would provide additional gap financing to projects which would otherwise be denied funding for existing opportunities, including the BHRI program and the Housing Production Fund based on over-enrollment.
- It is expected that projects with unmet needs could include otherwise qualified applicants of existing programs
- Investment would be targeted at assisting individuals with an income below 80% of AMI.
- Major federal funding for housing (e.g., through ERA-1 and ERA-2), as well as CRF-funded efforts deployed through the state, have primarily focused on rental assistance and homelessness response, rather than direct funding for affordable housing projects.
- SFRF Eligibility: To provide services to disproportionately impacted communities. The development of affordable housing for the benefit of low-income households and communities is an allowable use of SFRF, and the agency has indicated that the investment would be targeted at assisting individuals with an income below 80% of area median income.

# Site Acquisition Program

## **\$12M for a property acquisition grant program to increase homeownership and affordable housing opportunities in low-income areas**

- This initiative would support property acquisition focused on developing additional housing options for Rhode Islanders currently experiencing homelessness and housing instability.
- These funds would provide for a grant program administered by RI Housing which would be complementary to ongoing and planned investments financed by affordable housing bonds and funds from the Housing Production Fund.
- Investment would be targeted at assisting individuals with an income below 80% of AMI.
- SFRF Eligibility: To provide services to disproportionately impacted communities. The program will fund the acquisition of properties for redevelopment as both affordable and supportive housing for the unhoused.

# Housing Stability

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## **\$1.5M dedicated to expanded housing navigation, stabilization, and mental health services for the homeless**

- This initiative addresses the strained homeless provider network and expand diversion programming as needed.
- The program is narrowly tailored at providing housing navigation, stabilization, and mental health services for homeless individuals ineligible for the Emergency Rental Assistance program.
- The funds for this initiative would be supported by the contracted administrative and program management support capacity proposed under "Affordable Housing Capacity".
- SFRF Eligibility: To provide services to disproportionately impacted communities. The program is narrowly tailored at providing housing navigation, stabilization, and mental health services for homeless individuals ineligible for the Emergency Rental Assistance program. Unhoused individuals have been identified by U.S. Treasury as a population that was disproportionately impacted by the pandemic.

# Affordable Housing Capacity

## **\$0.5M for temporary contract staffing support at the Office of Housing and Community Development to assist in homelessness programs**

- These funds would provide for contract positions for an estimated six-month period focusing on areas such as research and data, stakeholder engagement, and a dedicated program director for homelessness programs.
- This initiative would address the limited staffing capacity at OHCD, which is a barrier to the state's ability to respond to opportunities and challenges related to increasing the state's supply of affordable housing.
- The additional contract support to OHCD would assist with efforts of the Office's housing efforts across the state, which include federally funded programs, various Community Development Block Grants, the Neighborhood Stabilization program, Emergency Shelter Grants, G.O. affordable housing bonds, BHRI program, and the Housing Production Fund.
- SFRF Eligibility: Although this investment is related to the development of affordable housing units, the requested expenditures surrounding the personal and predevelopment work would be a compliant use of State Fiscal Recovery Funds only under the Revenue Replacement / Provision of Government Services category.

# Broadband Infrastructure

## **\$0.5M dedicated to strategic planning of broadband expansion for unserved and underserved households and businesses**

- This initiative would allow the state to develop strategies to pursue an equitable, accessible broadband infrastructure for targeted populations including K-12, public colleges, public housing authority residents, municipalities, seniors, adults living with disabilities, and small businesses.
- Rhode Island is at a disadvantage relative to peers as the state lacks a current broadband strategic plan.
- \$400,000 will be utilized by the state to provide contractor support to conduct mapping and a needs assessment on statewide broadband infrastructure and capacity.
- \$100,000 will support the hiring of a state broadband coordinator at the RI Commerce Corporation.
- SFRF Eligibility: Investment in infrastructure, under the subcategory of other broadband projects. Under the interim final rule, eligible projects are expected to focus on locations that are unserved or underserved. The project explained above will allow the state to target further broadband investment to those communities.