

# **The Green New Deal for Public Housing Act**

*Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.) and Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-NY)*

The nation is currently facing a climate emergency *and* an affordable housing crisis. We have an opportunity to address both of these issues at once by weatherizing, electrifying and modernizing our public housing so that it may serve as a model of efficiency, sustainability and resiliency for the rest of the nation. The Green New Deal for Public Housing would transition the entire public housing stock of the United States, as swiftly and seamlessly as possible, into zero-carbon, highly energy-efficient developments that produce on-site renewable energy, expand workforce capacity and family self-sufficiency programs and focus on community development. Further, residents of public housing routinely suffer worse health outcomes due to mold infestations, lead contamination, poor indoor air quality, and unsafe temperatures and this bill would clear the substantial public housing capital backlog - ensuring all public housing is brought up to safe and sanitary conditions. No matter the circumstances you were born into, this bill ensures that everyone has a shot at economic and social empowerment.

Specifically, the Green New Deal for Public Housing Act would expand federal programs to provide residents with meaningful work investing in their communities, facilitate resident - owned and operated businesses, and allow for the participation in the management of public housing. The bill would expand resident councils so that public housing residents have a seat at the table for important decisions regarding their homes. And, the Green New Deal for Public Housing Act would repeal the Faircloth Amendment, which limits the construction of new public housing developments. This is an important step toward providing affordable housing for all. The bill would create two new grant programs to modernize our public housing stock through:

- Deep energy retrofits to increase energy savings in all [950,000](#) public housing units;
- Addressing community workforce development needs by prioritizing good-paying job opportunities for residents;
- Energy efficiency, building electrification and water quality upgrades;
- Community renewable energy generation, the profits of which will be controlled by Public Housing Agencies (PHAs) to boost their coffers and increase self-sufficiency;
- Recycling;
- Community resiliency and sustainability;
- Climate adaptation and emergency disaster response.

In order to qualify for these grants, PHAs must guarantee resident engagement, and contractors must support strong labor standards (buy American, prevailing wages, project labor agreements for large projects, no arbitration clauses, employees not contractors, and collective bargaining) and American manufacturing. The bill fully funds tenant protection vouchers for all displaced residents. It encourages replacement public housing to be built first and guarantees a right to return to their homes.

This legislation would also bring substantial economic and public health benefits to communities across the country. According to an analysis by the climate + community project this legislation [would](#):

- Invest up to \$172 billion in green retrofits that would include all needed capital repairs and eliminate carbon emissions.
- Create up to 240,000 jobs per year across the county
- Reduce annual carbon emissions by roughly 5.6 million metric tons, the equivalent of taking over 1.2 million cars off the road.
- Reduce public housing water bills by up to 30% per year, or \$97 million.
- Reduce public housing energy bills by up to 70% per year, or \$613 million.