

NLHA Bulletin

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HUD Leadership

President-Elect Biden to Nominate Marcia Fudge for HUD Secretary

PRESIDENT-ELECT JOE BIDEN announced he will nominate Rep. Marcia L. Fudge, an Ohio Democrat, to serve as HUD secretary in his new administration, describing her as a leading voice for working families. Fudge has represented the 11th Congressional district in the Cleveland metro area for 12 years.

Congresswoman Fudge is a longtime champion of affordable housing, urban revitalization, infrastructure investment, and civil rights. If confirmed as the 18th HUD secretary, she will be the first woman to lead HUD in 40 years and the second Black woman, after Patricia Harris, to lead the department. She is a former mayor of Warrensville Heights, Ohio, and past chair of the Congressional Black Caucus.

Fudge currently serves on the Committee on House Administration, Agriculture Committee, and the Committee on Education and Labor. She chairs the House Administration Committee's Subcommittee on Elections and the Agriculture Subcommittee on Nutrition, Oversight, and Department Operations. She is a past national president of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., and a member of its greater Cleveland chapter.

Anticipated Policy Shift

The next HUD secretary is widely expected to reverse fair housing policies put into effect by the Trump administration, including access to homeless shelters and services by transgender people, the fair housing regulation on disparate impact discrimination, and the affirmatively furthering fair housing (AFFH) regulation. As a House member, Fudge has also been interested in supporting a healthy level of funding for HUD housing assistance and community development.

One of Fudge's concerns in Congress has been the persistent difference in economic progress for African-Americans and other minorities, which she called "alarming." For example, she noted in a 2018 speech that the median net worth of Black families at the time was \$17,600 compared to \$171,000 for white families. Many families' net worth is a result of home values, and she noted homeownership rates that were 71% for white households while black homeownership was at 41%.

"America will only be great if we ensure our policies create opportunities for all Americans and address the structural racism that preserves the racial wealth divide," she said. "If we don't direct need-resources to communities of highest need, they will never catch up."

NLHA Offers Help

The affordable housing industry has expressed support for the nomination. NLHA Executive Director Denise Muha welcomed the appointment in a press release: “Representative Fudge has been a champion of affordable housing, and her experience as a former mayor and in Congress will be critically important during this time when so many families are enduring economic stress during the coronavirus pandemic,” she said. “NLHA stands ready to provide advice on how to best preserve and create housing opportunities for low income families.”