

Leaders and Organizers for Tenant Empowerment

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HUD Tenants Demand Congress Reject Trump's Plan to Replace 2.3 Million Section 8 Vouchers with Block Grants

For release: April 24, 2025

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Section 8 Voucher tenants from across the US today demanded immediate rejection by Congress of President Donald Trump's reported [plan to replace 2.3 million Section 8 Vouchers with Block Grants to the States](#). The plan for 'deep cuts' to Section 8 was leaked from the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB) in an April 17, 2025 article in the New York Times.

"This isn't just policy—it's punishment," said Alice Robinson, a Voucher tenant, Executive Director of Vision for Families in Dallas, and board member of the Texas Tenants Union. "You cannot gut HUD, cut staff by nearly half, slash fair housing enforcement, and then say you care about American families."

"Replacing Section 8 with Block Grants will devastate already underserved communities. Families, seniors, and people with disabilities will be pushed further into poverty, segregation will surge, and the very promise of equal opportunity will be stripped away."

Adds Robinson, "I've been homeless before, and don't want to be homeless again. We urge Congress to listen to the people and reject this dangerous and inhumane proposal."

"Only one in four people like me who need federal rent assistance can get it today—a major cause of homelessness and the nation's housing crisis," says Eric Colin-Smith, a disabled, elderly Voucher tenant in Boston, Massachusetts and board member of the Mass Alliance of HUD Tenants (MAHT). Adds Charlotte Rodgers, a long-time Brooklyn tenant leader and co-founder of the Leaders and Organizers for Tenant Empowerment (LOFTE) Network., "We need more, not less, Section 8 assistance to meet the nation's housing needs."

The proposed cuts come in the wake of DOGE plans to reduce HUD staff by 48%, including 50% of Public Housing staff who administer Section 8 and Public Housing programs, and a 77% cut to HUDs Fair Housing enforcement staff. One result will be a spike in racial and economic segregation as both Vouchers and HUD's enforcement capacity are slashed.

Already, Congress shortchanged Section 8 by \$700 million in the FY 2025 Continuing Resolution adopted in March, which could result in 32,000 fewer Vouchers by September 2025. Local housing authorities in Cambridge and Somerville, Massachusetts, are already notifying tenants of potential lease terminations due to funding shortfalls.

The OMB Section 8 proposal is not yet final. Trump is expected to file his FY 2026 federal budget request in the coming weeks.

In 2018 and 2019, then OMB Director Russell Vought, who has now returned to his previous OMB role, proposed to phase out all federal rent subsidies for 9 million extremely low income people over 10 years, starting with a rent increase from 30 to 35% of income for rent—an immediate 22% rent hike in the first year. Tenants and allies were able to defeat these cuts with bipartisan support on Capitol Hill.

"Vought's latest proposal is even more extreme," comments LOFTE Co-Chair Michael Kane. a

long-time housing advocate in Boston. “Replacing Section 8 Vouchers with Block Grants, at reduced funding levels, will force States and housing authorities to freeze wait lists, raise rents to tenants, and ultimately cut people from subsidies in the middle of their lease.”

Kane noted that converting federal programs into Block Grants to local governments, at reduced funding levels, is a favorite nostrum of far right opponents of social programs since the 1970’s. “Block grants mask funding cuts and shift blame onto local governments and away from federal elected officials when the inevitable cutbacks occur,” adds Kane.

The proposed Section 8 cuts are in addition to the \$1.5 trillion in 10 year cuts to programs such as Medicaid and SNAP already voted by Congressional Republicans, to pay for an extension of \$5.5 trillion in tax cuts to mostly high income individuals, which are set to expire this year.

The Administration’s 2026 budget request is expected to propose even deeper cuts to HUD, HHS and other safety net programs to pay for even more tax cuts for the rich. Besides Section 8, OMB also recently ‘floated’ a one third cut of \$40 billion for a wide variety of health and disease control programs administered by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). The Administration has also proposed to end funding for Head Start, which provides pre-school education for millions of children, and the Low Income Housing and Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), which provides vital assistance to help low income people pay utility bills.

“Trump’s Section 8 proposal is a recipe of inequality, segregation, and crime against the most vulnerable. If adopted, it would increase homelessness and poverty across the US. It will only make the billionaire class richer, at the expense of the working class,” said Yanira Cortes, a Voucher tenant in Ocean County, New Jersey, and a leader in the Greater Newark HUD Tenant Coalition. “We demand Congress reject this proposal.”

Formed in 2022, Leaders and Organizers for Tenant Empowerment (LOFTE) is the national tenants organization representing 5.5 million families in privately-owned, federally-assisted multifamily housing. LOFTE’s mission is to empower residents to save and improve their homes as affordable housing.