

2022 Policy Agenda: Rebuilding Stronger, More Equitable Indiana Communities

As COVID-19 moves into its third year, the pandemic continues to have unequal effects on Hoosiers, their communities, and the organizations who have been serving them on the front lines. Prosperity Indiana's 2022 policy agenda focuses on federal, state, and administrative opportunities to rebuild stronger, more equitable Indiana communities by prioritizing recovery for the hardest-hit Hoosiers; strengthening the infrastructure of resources for the state's community economic development sector; and permanently improving the lives of Hoosiers long neglected by public policies.

For 2022, Prosperity Indiana's members believe these are the most urgent priorities to advance an equitable recovery that reaches all Hoosiers and their communities:

Urgent Policy Priorities



- An 'All of Government' response for housing instability



- Sustainability of recovery funding for community economic development organizations



- Advocate for Black and Latino Hoosiers and communities underserved by recovery efforts
- Support consumer protections throughout the recovery

In addition to these urgent recovery priorities, Prosperity Indiana's 2022 policy agenda includes opportunities to promote the long-term advancement of affordable housing, community development resources, and consumer protections in Indiana at the federal, state, and administrative levels.



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Strengthening our communities.



AFFORDABLE HOUSING

- Adoption of federal legislation to increase housing stability and security, including by bridging the gap between incomes and housing costs by expanding rental assistance to every eligible household; expanding and preserving the supply of rental homes affordable and accessible to people with the lowest incomes; creating a national housing stabilization fund; and strengthening and enforcing renter protections
- Increasing the supply and accessibility of affordable housing, including by creating a new tax credit to close the ‘value gap’ and invest in the development and renovation of affordable family housing in distressed urban, suburban, and rural neighborhoods, and by establishing a voucher program to help unstably housed or at-risk families with children move to areas with access to high-performing schools
- Ending housing discrimination and promoting inclusive communities by protecting the Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing rule and expanding fair housing resources

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES

- Robust federal funding for community development programs (homeless assistance, housing counseling, housing choice vouchers, rural development, etc.)
- Adoption of the Affordable Housing Credit Improvement Act (or similar legislation) to mitigate losses in Low Income Housing Tax Credit production due to tax reform and better facilitate development in challenging markets
- Creation of a refundable tax credit for cost-burdened renters who pay more than 30 percent of their annual gross income on rent and utilities



CONSUMER PROTECTION/ASSET DEVELOPMENT

- Modernizing examination standards for Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) activities to ensure that federally insured banks and thrifts better meet the needs of low- and moderate-income communities
- New tax credits and/or savings accounts for low-wealth individuals and families, such as the American Opportunity Accounts Act
- Capping borrowing rates at 36% APR through the Veterans and Consumers Fair Credit Act



AFFORDABLE HOUSING

- Increased renter protections for tenants to address serious habitability violations and address key issues that have helped fuel the eviction crisis in Indiana
- New housing stability measures for those economically impacted by COVID-19, including sealing or expunging eviction records and providing a right to access and correct errors in tenant screening records
- Enhanced opportunities and reduced barriers impacting community land trust programs to permanently preserve affordability and create homeownership opportunities for lower-income families

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES

- Enhanced mechanisms for local communities to fund land banking efforts and address the burdens of blight and abandoned property
- Building momentum to enact new state tax credit resources to expand affordable housing for low-income households in the next state budget cycle
- Defense of key tax credit programs that spur economic opportunity in local communities, such as the Individual Development Accounts (IDA) tax credit and the Neighborhood Assistance Program (NAP) tax credit

CONSUMER PROTECTION/ASSET DEVELOPMENT

- Establishing a max 36% rate cap for payday loans and opposing predatory products that disproportionately affect low-wealth individuals or families
- Safeguards against predatory rent-to-own contracts, where companies target low-income households and sell uninhabitable homes at high interest rates and terms that leads the borrower to default
- Protections for households undergoing medical or other COVID-related debts



AFFORDABLE HOUSING

- Strengthen and support the implementation of recovery funds, including Emergency Rental Assistance and Homeowner Assistance Funds using national best practices
- Inform prioritization of expenditures of the Indiana Affordable Housing and Community Development Fund in its goal to meet community economic development needs
- Advise on strategies outlined in the statewide Consolidated Plan and QAP on behalf of the membership

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES

- Urge agencies to reduce the administrative burdens placed on local service providers needed to deliver services to underserved and BIPOC communities
- Provide a united voice for concerns of PI members in order to reform processes for comments and administrative feedback to increase efficiency and effective use of feedback
- Engage in regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) planning designed to ensure U.S. Economic Development Administrative programs most effectively build regional economic prosperity

CONSUMER PROTECTION/ASSET DEVELOPMENT

- Provide feedback to financial institutions and regulators regarding the Community Reinvestment Act's ability to address fairness in lending
- Respond to federal consumer protection rules and regulations
- Prioritize equitable access to financial wealth-building and asset-development opportunities