

**LEGISLATIVE REPORT**  
**SWNAHRO STATE REPORT**  
**JANUARY, 2008**

Although the Texas Legislature does not meet again until January, 2009, the legislators will be involved studying various issues and preparing drafts of legislation for the 2009 Legislative Session. Of particular interest to NAHRO will be the interim charges to the House Committee on Urban Affairs. Speaker Craddick has charged this Committee to study the following housing issues:

1. Assess the current senior housing market and available options for affordable senior housing.
2. Research and update legislation that permits residential neighborhoods whose deed restrictions have lapsed to reinstate those deed restrictions or create needed deed restrictions through a petition committee by expanding them to more areas
3. Study and evaluate the levels, methods and alternatives by which the state funds all affordable housing programs, focusing on administrative cost-effectiveness to determine greater returns on investment, savings and efficiency. Examine the current procedures and applications of the annual, integrated Low Income Housing Plan prepared by the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs, and prepare recommendations for the development of a comprehensive, long-range, statewide plan or model to address growing needs throughout the state.
4. Monitor current methodology involving departmental rules, procedures and policies governing state and federal compliance in the evaluation and ranking of all multifamily affordable housing applications for the allocation of funds during the annual awards cycles.
5. Examine the development and implementation of a physical standards (asset oversight) rating system for multifamily residential rental facilities, to be used by all local and state issuers of tax-exempt bonds and tax credits, to determine eligibility for future financing and for compliance enforcement purposes.
6. Examine the policies and procedures by which local tax appraisers value rent-restricted affordable housing properties, and authorize legislatively established tax exemptions. Evaluate application and interpretation of existing statutes by local appraisal districts to affordable housing properties throughout the life cycle of developments. Make recommendations for statutory changes. (Joint Interim Charge with the House Committee on Local Government Ways and Means)

These six issues will be referred to a sub-committee of the House Urban Affairs Committee for study. Representative Jose Melendez (D) San Antonio will chair the

subcommittee. As in previous sessions, Representative Menendez specifically drafted the study issues broadly with the understanding that the stakeholders would meet in work sessions to discuss the details of the issues of specific concern to their group. These work groups and legislative hearings will not begin their work until after the primary election in March, and realistically meetings probably won't begin until sometime in April.

It is anticipated that the Lt. Governor will also issue interim charges to be studied by the Senate Committee on Intergovernmental Relations, but he has not yet done so.

The members of NAHRO's Legislative Committee will monitor and participate in these stakeholder and legislative meetings as they become scheduled.

The 2008 QAP Rules have been adopted by TDHCA and can be found on their website ([www.tdhca.state.tx.us](http://www.tdhca.state.tx.us)). At the TDHCA Board Meeting in November 2007, Representative Menendez expressed his concern about three proposed rules: (1) the proposed reduction in the senior capture rate for urban areas from 75 to 50 percent (2) the census tract boundaries and the concentration policies and (3) the higher scoring (higher than child-care programs) given to notary services. In the final adoption of the 2008 QAP Rules, the Board left the senior capture rate at 75 percent and reduced the scoring of the notary to one point. The Board adopted the staff recommendations concerning the census tract boundaries.

It has been suggested by TxNAHRO members that future QAP Rules need to be changed to allow Resident Councils to have full rights as a neighborhood organization and that the QAP allow reconstruction projects to be reconstructed at a different location. The Legislative Committee will consider this and other issues to develop a position for TxNAHRO. All members are encouraged to submit their concerns to the Legislative Committee.

Election of all 150 Texas House members and 14 of the 31 Senators will occur in 2008. At the Federal level, all 32 Texas Congressional seats and one Senator will be on the ballot. And of course, the presidential elections are this year too. All members of TxNAHRO are encouraged to take time to get to know their elected officials during this campaign season. As legislators are campaigning, they want to have the opportunity to get to know your issues and even speak to your local groups or residents. Contact members of the TxNAHRO Legislative Committee if you want assistance in making these legislative contacts.