

Welcome to The State Affairs' first newsletter of 2025. In this edition, we look back on big wins of 2024 and hear updates from Executive Officers on some of their most impactful projects. We continue to strive to create an interactive experience, so please reach out and let us know how you like the issue and how we can improve.

TAKING A STAND AGAINST NIMBYS IN 2025

By Karl Eckhart | VP, State & Local Government Affairs, NAHB



“So, first of all, let me assert my firm belief that the only thing we have to fear is fear itself—nameless, unreasoning, unjustified terror which paralyzes needed efforts to convert retreat into advance.”

This quote is from the inauguration speech of President Roosevelt in 1933. America is not nearly in the same dire straits; however, the housing policy crisis of today would lessen if people who have a home stop fearing those who want to live in their neighborhood.

The term we tend to use for citizens opposed to change in their community is NIMBYs (Not In My Backyard). The term's first known use was in the late 1970's as a reaction to power plants and highways built near neighborhoods. Now, the term refers to the reaction against the construction of attainable homes, and often because it will diversify the population within that community.

Members and HBA staff regularly contact NAHB for assistance to overcome anti-growth sentiment. The problem is so pervasive that you or another colleague in a nearby market has encountered a local vote to enact a moratorium; faced an increase in a sewer hookup fee of 300%; or a deeply flawed design review process that only allows for homes to be constructed with brick. Opposition to new development is not only from a small group of engaged citizens, but also from interest groups from all political stripes and social affiliations.

Nearly four out of five Americans (77%) agree that America is in the midst of a housing affordability crisis and that officials at all levels of government are not doing enough to address this vital issue, according to a recent NAHB survey. In addition,

more than half (56%) say it's important to create more medium-density affordable housing to moderate-income households, younger households and first-time home buyers.

Clearly, there is an urgent need for the housing industry to articulate the connection between boosting the housing supply and housing affordability.

There are steps HBAs and members can take to help temper down opposition to new development. If you are currently facing a moratorium that hampers growth in your community and need additional support, submit an application to the State and Local Issues Fund. NAHB's State and Local Government Affairs Committee has provided funds to HBAs for consumer education campaigns and advocacy strategies.

Another tactic is fostering relationships with your city council members. Most city leaders are not well-versed in residential construction, so discussing the importance of a streamlined approval process or providing information on the benefits of objective design and architectural standards can help limit opposition. Most importantly, when elected officials muster up the political will to approve new development, we must take the time to thank them.

We can build the million-plus homes a year needed when we spearhead high-impact campaigns to educate our citizens and city leaders. Please reach out to the State and Local Advocacy staff so we can help you take a stand against NIMBYs in 2025.