



# DPC Issue Brief

...promoting progressive public policy  
for Texans with disabilities.

**Title:** Support all efforts to create more ‘real’ affordable housing to meet the needs of Texans with disabilities at 50% and below area median income

**Background:** Many people with disabilities needing affordable housing receive their income from Supplemental Security Income (SSI), approx. \$604/month. Most federal, state and local funding for housing goes to the development of housing at rental rates above the federal affordability standard for people at this income level. Rental assistance programs have an average waiting list of 2-3 years, leading to unnecessary institutionalization at a much higher cost to taxpayers. People with disabilities share this struggle with many others who have extremely low incomes.

During the 79th Legislative Session, the DPC members joined with advocates for the development of more housing for people with low-incomes such as Texas Low Income Housing Services, Texas Housing Forum, Texas Association of CDCs, CPP and others and were successful in defeating HB1167, as well as, other challenges to programs designed to serve people with low incomes.

The Texas Housing Forum is undertaking a campaign to increase the funds allocated to the state’s Housing Trust Fund administered by Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs. Currently the fund receives approximately \$3 million in general fund appropriations annually. The majority of the funds are allocated to the ‘Bootstrap’ program to support development in the colonias and self-help programs. The Forum is exploring options to expand the source of funding for the Trust Fund potentially to ‘dedicated fees’ (real estate transfer fees, special license plate fees, etc.).

With an increase in the funds dedicated to the Housing Trust Fund, program models such as Iowa’s housing voucher program may be options for support for increase support to address the affordability of housing facing many Texans with disabilities. In addition, support from the Trust Fund could promote the development of barrier removal programs for people with disabilities needing home modifications to live independently or to leave institutions.

Increased funding would provide the opportunity to support more programs to address the need for accessible and affordable housing for people with disabilities.

**Recommendation:** The Disability Policy Consortium (DPC) recommends that the Texas Legislature promotes legislation that addresses the housing needs of extremely low income households, including people with disabilities

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**MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS:** *Statewide Members:* Advocacy, Incorporated, Brain Injury Association of Texas, Coalition of Texans with Disabilities, Epilepsy Coalition of Texas, The Institute for Disability Access/ADAPT, Lone Star Association for Persons in Supported Employment, Mental Health Association in Texas, National Alliance for the Mentally Ill of Texas, National Multiple Sclerosis Society of Texas, Texas Advocates, Texas AIDS Network, Texas Association of Centers for Independent Living, Texas Association of the Deaf, Texas Center for Disability Studies/ Texas Technology Access Project, Texas Council for Developmental Disabilities, Texas Federation of Families for Children’s Mental Health, Texas Legal Services Center, Texas Mental Health Consumers, Texas State Independent Living Council, Texas State Sickle Cell Disease Association of America, The Center on Disability and Development at Texas A&M University, Council for Families for Children, United Cerebral Palsy of Texas, The Spina Bifida Association of Texas, Inc., and the Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance of Texas. *Local Members:* Epilepsy Foundation Central & South Texas. REACH Resource Centers on Independent Living – Dallas, Fort Worth and Denton, Corpus Christi Committee for Persons with Disabilities, Goodwill of Central Texas and Coastal Bend Center for Independent Living