

START Housing Act

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Endorsements: National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH), National Alliance on
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Access to housing is critical for stability and success of individuals seeking treatment for mental illness and substance use disorders. Despite the fundamental importance of safe housing, people in recovery face substantial barriers. Restrictions on housing access for people with histories of drug use jeopardize their long-term recovery, as well as increase the risk of experiencing homelessness. [Recovery housing](#) models address these issues by providing alcohol or drug free housing communities with dedicated peer support to promote recovery from substance use disorders.

In 2018, Congress identified the need to expand access to recovery housing in the Substance Use-Disorder Prevention that Promotes Opioid Recovery and Treatment (SUPPORT) for Patients and Communities Act. This legislation establishes the [Recovery Housing Program](#) (RHP) at the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), which secures funding for some states and the District of Columbia to provide stable, transitional housing for individuals in recovery from a substance use disorder. The funding covers a period of not more than two years or until the individual secures permanent housing.

Unfortunately, RHP does not operate in every state. The **Supporting Transition And Recovery Through (START) Housing Act** would strengthen RHP and expand it to all states. The bill would:

- Update the RHP formula to maintain resources for states currently in the program and allow all states to access this model;
- Integrate the results of the annual HUD point-in-time count to increase resources in communities with both high rates of unsheltered homelessness and substance use disorders;
- Promote coordination between state housing finance agencies, recovery housing operators, Continuums of Care that serve people experiencing homelessness, and public housing authorities to guarantee stable housing for people leaving the program;
- Provide technical assistance to states participating in RHP; and
- Direct the Office of Community Planning and Development to consult with the Office of Special Needs Assistance, which oversees federal homelessness programs, when implementing RHP.