To expand communications between Washington and California, the California Institute provides periodic news bulletins regarding current activity on Capitol Hill and other information that directly impacts the state. Bulletins are published weekly during sessions of Congress, and occasionally during other periods.

**Appropriations: Congressional Leaders Reach Deal on FY13 CR**

The House and Senate leaders announced on August 1, 2012 that they have reached an agreement on how to handle funding for Fiscal Year 2013 which begins October 1, 2012. They have agreed to pass a six-month Continuing Resolution to keep the government running after September. The vote on the CR is expected to occur after the House and Senate return from their five-week summer recess, which begins at the end of this week. Staff will draft the legislation during the hiatus.

Under the deal, funding for the government would be set for the fiscal year at $1.047 trillion, in keeping with the agreement reached last year between Congress and the White House over raising the debt ceiling. Fiscal Year 2012 spending is estimated to be about the same.

Keeping the government funded through March 2013 will clear the deck so Congress and the Administration can concentrate on getting a deal to avert the massive spending cuts and tax increases set to occur if sequestration takes effect on January 1, 2013.

**Taxes: Senate Finance Approves Tax Extenders, Including R&D Credit**

After reaching a bipartisan agreement on Wednesday, the Senate Finance Committee approved a package of tax extenders by a 19-5 vote at a markup on August 2, 2012.

The package addresses 52 tax provisions. Among others, it extends the research and development tax credit, which is strongly supported by California businesses, especially those involved in the information technology and biomedical industries.

The proposal also includes a provision to patch the Alternative Minimum Tax (AMT). According to the Committee, the two-year patch will prevent the AMT from hitting 27 million middle-class taxpayers in the 2012 tax year alone. The two-year extension of the AMT is estimated to cost $132.2 billion over ten years. Extension of the deduction for qualified tuition and related expenses is included in the bill, as is the tax credit for qualified home energy efficiency improvements. The Work Opportunity Tax credit is also...
extended for two years. Special expensing rules for certain film and television productions were included in the package and are extended for two years. Several extensions of energy credits and deductions were also included in the package.

However, Chairman Max Baucus’s amendment in a nature of a substitute, approved at the markup, dropped some tax extensions that were originally in the bill, including one allowing the expensing of “brownfields” environmental remediation costs. The Chairman’s initial bill would have extended for two years the tax provision that allows for the expensing of costs associated with cleaning up hazardous “brownfield” sites. The modified proposal does not extend the provisions. Removing this provision reduces the estimated cost of the bill by $363 million over ten years, according to the Committee.

For more information on the bill, go to the Joint Committee on Taxation at: https://www.jct.gov/.

**TAXES: HOUSE PASSES BILL EXTENDING 2001-2003 TAX CUTS; REJECTS BILL TO LET TAXES RISE ON HIGHER INCOME EARNERS**

By a vote of 256-171, the House on August 1, 2012, passed The Job Protection and Recession Prevention Act to extend all of the Bush era tax cuts for a year. It defeated a Democrat proposal that would have allowed tax rates to rise on earnings over $200,000 for individuals ($250,000 for couples). The vote on the alternative was 170-257.

The House action, as expected, was the exact opposite of that which the Senate took last week when it passed a bill allowing taxes on higher income earners to increase, and defeated the Republican alternative to extend all of the current tax rates for a year. See Bulletin, Vol. 19, No. 23 (7/26/12) at: http://www.calinst.org/bul2/b1923.shtml#TOC1_1.

No forward movement on how to handle the impending expiration of the 2001 and 2003 tax cuts is expected until after the November elections.

**AGRICULTURE: HOUSE PASSES DISASTER RELIEF BILL**

The House on Thursday, August 2, 2012, adopted H.R. 6322, the $383 million Agricultural Disaster Assistance Act of 2012 by a vote of 223-197. The bill would authorize relief assistance to ranchers and some others affected by the 2012 drought and other disasters like wildfires.

It is important to note that, as passed, the bill would only provide assistance to affected livestock ranchers and generally not to other agricultural producers. In the bill, livestock includes cattle, dairy cattle, bison, poultry, sheep, swine, horses, and other livestock as determined by the Secretary of Agriculture. Other than livestock, only a few selected types of orchardist or nursery tree growers and a few honeybee and farm-raised fish farmers are covered.

The final vote for passage came under a closed rule provided for by H. Res. 752. This drew protest from opponents, who wanted to be able to offer amendments, especially in light of the short legislative review period. The contents of the bill were posted on the House Rules Committee website late Tuesday.

Opponents also primarily objected to the legislation’s offsets, which would largely come from cuts to conservation programs. These programs, they claim, are the very programs needed to help farmers and ranchers succeed by conserving soil and water, and thus creating resiliency to disaster.

The Congressional Budget Office estimates that the cuts to conservation programs would reduce the budget deficit by $256 million over a decade.
The drought relief bill comes on the heels of efforts to bring both a long-term farm bill and a one-year extension incorporating drought relief to the House floor before Congress' five week-long August recess. It was last month that the House Agriculture Committee passed a bill to reauthorize farm and nutrition programs for a period of five years. Due to contention regarding proposed cuts to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), it was not expected to have the votes to pass. The combo one-year extension and drought relief bill also faced an anticipated lack of votes to pass. Therefore, the immediate need to pass drought relief legislation became the overarching goal as the August district work period approached. However, the Senate is not expected to take up the issue before also leaving for the recess this week.

For more information, go to: http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/thomas.

**SPACE: HOUSE SUBCOMMITTEE ADDRESSES MARKET FOR SUBORBITAL REUSABLE LAUNCH VEHICLES**

On August 1, 2012, the House Science, Space, and Technology Subcommittee on Space and Aeronautics held a hearing titled *The Emerging Commercial Suborbital Reusable Launch Vehicle Market.*

The hearing focused on the introduction of new commercial suborbital reusable launch vehicles (SRVs) in the private sector. This has enabled the emergence of new markets beyond traditional suborbital launch operations – rockets that travel into space but do not have the energy to orbit the Earth. A number of these new companies are already testing their vehicles and plan to initiate commercial operations within a few years. The hearing examined the potential launch markets and applications for SRVs, the benefits that SRVs offer the scientific community for research, and the regulatory uncertainties that may have the most impact on the emerging commercial SRV industry.

Witnesses included: Ms. Carissa Christensen, Managing Partner, The Tauri Group; Dr. Alan Stern, Chairman, Suborbital Applications Researchers Group; Mr. George Whitesides, CEO and President, Virgin Galactic LLC; Mr. Bretton Alexander, Director, Business Development and Strategy, Blue Origin; Mr. Andrew Nelson, Chief Operating Officer, XCOR Aerospace, Mojave, CA; and, Dr. Stephan R. McCandliss, Research Professor, The Johns Hopkins University.

Mr. Nelson said the new SRV market's "successful emergence is critical to America's future economic strength, global scientific leadership, educational supremacy and our national security." He testified that XCOR focuses on two product lines: "fully reusable rocket engines and related hardware, and suborbital RLV launch services and sales (wet leasing) using those engines." In the future, he hopes that "XCOR and our friendly competitors can return the US to global Space industry preeminence" if laws and policies allow export of technologies worldwide. Mr. Nelson then spent time detailing XCOR's products, market growth and success, the impact of regulatory uncertainties, and the company's record of active engagement on safety, regulation, and policy.

Other issues discussed:

- The Tauri Group's recently completed 6-month study, which forecasts 10-year demand for SRVs. The purpose was to develop an objective and rigorous forecast of SRV demand and market dynamics. Among other findings, the study concluded, "demand for SRV flights at current prices is genuine, sustained, and appears sufficient to support multiple providers."
- Specifics on why SRVs are expected to be extremely useful research and education tools, including the fact that they: could spark increased interest in Science, Engineering, Technology and Math (STEM) education; provide frequent and low-cost access to space; provide much gentler rides than traditional models; fly large payloads; have a simpler and more rapid payload safety/integration process; and provide the opportunity for researchers to fly with their payloads.
- The possibility for SRVs to be used by NASA for astronaut training, as they provide a low cost but realistic space experience for trainees.
- Regulatory issues as related to the market for SRVs and their commercial use.
For more information, go to: science.house.gov/hearing/subcommittee-space-and-aeronautics-emerging-commercial-suborbital-reusable-launch-vehicle.

**TECHNOLOGY: HOUSE COMMITTEE PASSES REAUTHORIZATION OF U.S. SAFE WEB ACT**


Set to expire next year, the reauthorization of the Act gives the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) additional administrative tools to share information with its foreign counterparts and more effectively protect consumers from increased threats of cross-border fraud, spam, and spyware. H.R. 6131 extends this consumer protection law for another seven years.

Following the vote on her bill, which now heads to the House floor for action, Congresswoman Bono Mack released the following statement:

"Even though it serves billions of users worldwide – with e-commerce in the United States topping $200 billion last year for the first time and up 15 percent so far this year – the Internet remains a work in progress. Still, in just over 25 years, the Internet has not only changed our lives, it has become 'part' of our lives. But today, do Americans really believe enough is being done today to protect them from online fraud? "Frankly, I'm very concerned that e-commerce will cease to grow and flourish if consumers lose faith in their ability to be protected from online predators, jeopardizing future innovation as well as our nation's fragile economic recovery. By any measure, the U.S. SAFE WEB Act has been a clear success and should be reauthorized before its expiration next year."

About a decade ago, the FTC began to highlight the growing problems it encountered in effectively combating Internet scams and fraud directed at American citizens by foreign operators, often-times involving organized crime rings. By 2005, an estimated 20 percent of consumer complaints the FTC received involved fraud originating outside of the United States. According to an analysis of those complaints from the Consumer Sentinel Network, Americans suffered annual losses to foreign operators, totaling nearly $220 million.

First approved by Congress in 2006, the U.S. SAFE WEB Act authorized the FTC to:
- Share information involving cross border fraud with foreign consumer protection agencies;
- Secure and protect confidential information from foreign consumer protection agencies from public disclosure that otherwise would not be shared by many foreign law enforcement agencies;
- Pursue fraud-based legal action by amending the "unfair or deceptive acts or practices" to include acts involving foreign commerce or material misconduct within the United States;
- Seek redress on behalf of foreign consumers victimized by U.S.-based wrong-doers; and
- Make criminal referrals for cross-border criminal activity when violations of FTC law also violate U.S. criminal law.

EDUCATION: HOUSE HEARING FOCUSES ON RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BUSINESS AND RESEARCH UNIVERSITIES

On Wednesday, August 1, 2012, the House Committee On Science, Space, And Technology Subcommittee on Research and Science Education held a hearing titled The Relationship Between Business and Research Universities: Collaborations Fueling American Innovation and Job Creation.

Witnesses included: Mr. William D. Green, Executive Chairman, Accenture, Boston, MA; Dr. Ray O. Johnson, Senior Vice President and Chief Technology Officer, Lockheed Martin, Corporation, Bethesda, MD; Dr. John S. Hickman, Director, Global University Relations and Life Sciences, Deere and Company, Moline, IL; Dr. Lou Graziano, Director, University R&D Strategy, Sustainable Technologies & Innovation Sourcing, The Dow Chemical Company, Spring House, PA; Ms. Jilda Diehl Garton, Vice President for Research and General Manager, Georgia Tech Research Corporation, Georgia Institute of Technology, Atlanta, GA.

Issues discussed at the hearing included:

- The National Academy of Science Committee on Research Universities' report Research Universities and the Future of America: Ten Breakthrough Actions Vital to Our Nation's Prosperity and Security. The report's ten recommendations for improvement centered around three broad goals: 1) strengthen the partnership among universities, federal and state governments, philanthropy and business in order to revitalize university research and speed its translation into innovative products and services; 2) improve the productivity of administrative operations, research and education within universities; and, 3) ensure that America's pipeline of future talent in science, engineering and other research areas remains creative and vital, leveraging the abilities of all of its citizens and attracting the best students and scholars from around the world.

- The relationship between graduate education and research and development. Witnesses stressed that people with graduate degrees drive research and development which fuels U.S innovation and job creation. They called for increased attention to the issue of preparing graduate students for the broad array of careers available in the 21st century, specifically recommending enhancing professional development and training opportunities for graduate students and maintaining investments in the U.S. graduate education system.

- The fact that over the last several decades, industry has largely dismantled the large corporate research laboratories that drove American industrial leadership in the 20th century (e.g., Bell Labs), but it has not yet fully partnered with research universities to fill the gap. Nor has it adequately partnered with university programs to help produce the advanced graduates that industry needs. Businesses should seize opportunities to incentivize early stage research collaboration with universities, witnesses said.

- Details of Lockheed Martin's partnerships with universities. While it still invests in a wide variety of technical domains, they are increasingly concentrating efforts in fewer, larger partnerships with universities focusing on the strategic areas of Energy, Nanotechnology and Advanced Materials, Logistics and Sustainment, Cyber Security, and Healthcare. Also, Lockheed Martin-supported curriculum tailoring is currently used at the University of California Los Angeles in the field of mechanical and aerospace engineering.

- Ways that industry plays an important role in advising universities as to the relevance of research and workforce programs in addressing current and future business needs.

- Challenges frequently faced by business-university partnerships, including: the normally long period of time to negotiate a research agreement; immigration issues associated with foreign nationals attending U.S. research universities, especially in engineering (where a significant number of graduate students hold temporary visas); intellectual property issues; and, maintaining the research focus and discipline once a collaboration is in place.

- The long-term implications of the U.S.’s critical workforce shortage in STEM-related fields and the World Economic Forum's ranking of the U.S. as number 51 in the quality of its math and science education.
ENERGY: HOUSE SUBCOMMITTEE HOLDS HEARING ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CLEAN AIR ACT

The House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Power held a hearing on the Clean Air Act on July 31, 2012. The forum was titled *State, Local, and Federal Cooperation in the Clean Air Act*. The purpose of the hearing was to hear testimony on the following issues:
- State, local and tribal experiences implementing the Clean Air Act;
- Autonomy and flexibility to address local conditions and needs;
- Timely, accurate permitting for business activities, balancing environment protection and economic growth;
- State Implementation Plans as a mechanism for federal, state, tribal and local cooperation; and
- Cross-state air pollution and interstate coordination.

Witnesses included Brad Poiriez, Air Pollution Control Officer, Imperial County Air Pollution Control District, and environmental service officials from several other states and the Navajo Nation.

Mr. Poiriez testified that while Imperial County "enforces some of the most aggressive air pollution control laws anywhere," it "recognizes that there are sources of [particulate matter] (PM) over which it has absolutely no control." He said the county undertook an "intensive and expensive" effort to convince the State of California and its Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) that the "handful of days where PM emissions were above the standard" were caused by weather and high winds in the undeveloped dry desert -- not by regulation violations. PM readings are also complicated by the county's border proximity to Mexicali, Mexico, where "unpaved roads, and PM from open burning of trash, tires... is a daily occurrence," he said. Nevertheless, the county continues to face sanctions by the EPA, including withholding of federal highway funds. He then explained how the CAA is written to protect jurisdictions like this from unfair punishments due to cross-jurisdiction contamination.

In terms of improvements to the CAA's implementation, Mr. Poiriez testified that timeframes for finalizing regulations and State Improvement Plans (SIP) could be sped up to avoid confusion. In addition, he said that formal rule making must be the main way regulations are formed -- not informal guidance and determinations.

Other issues discussed at the hearing included:
- The fact that "standards" are often promulgated without technical implementation rules in place. This places States in an extremely difficult position -- that is to assert that the infrastructure will be in place in a timely manner and revise the SIP or other program requirements without the real tools to implement the new requirements.
- Implementation problems in meeting the deadlines by which States have to submit SIP revisions. Failure to meet deadlines can result in a delay of the implementation of air pollution control programs, but as standards are intertwined, it is not reasonable to expect the states to have their state regulations in place quickly enough to provide EPA the revised SIPs by the proposed deadline, which further complicates the ability to meet deadlines in related SIPs.
- The business permitting system can be overly burdensome, complicated and lengthy; in some cases, without an observable value-added benefit to public health or the environment.
- The Act's regulatory structure for setting standards for the criteria pollutants requires that they be set at a level requisite to protect public health with an adequate margin of safety. This requirement anticipates that there is some absolutely safe level for each pollutant, which is not the case.
- Quantified Clean Air Act regulatory benefits for Individual regulations often do not exceed the societal costs of those regulations.
- Concerns about the heavy reliance on modeling to meet ozone, fine particulate and sulfur dioxide standards. While a useful tool, some witnesses said there are inherent uncertainties in all modeling that must be taken into consideration when interpreting results.
- Suggestions that the SIP mechanism could be improved by not automatically requiring a SIP revision to remedy nonattainment of an air quality standard where nonattainment can be attributed to a single or small number of emission sources.


ENVIRONMENT: SENATE COMMITTEE HOLDS HEARING ON CLIMATE CHANGES AND LOCAL ADAPTATION

On August 1, 2012, the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee held a full committee hearing titled Update on the Latest Climate Change Science and Local Adaptation Measures.

Witnesses were heard on two panels. Panel 1 included: Dr. Christopher B. Field, Director, Department of Global Ecology, Carnegie Institution for Science and Professor of Biology and Environmental Earth Science, Stanford University; Dr. John R. Christy, Distinguished Professor, Director of Earth System Science Center, Department of Atmospheric Science, University of Alabama in Huntsville; and, Dr. James J. McCarthy, Alexander Agassiz Professor of Biological Oceanography, Museum of Comparative Zoology, Harvard University. The second panel included: Secretary John R. Griffin, Maryland Department of Natural Resources; Dr. Margo Thorning, Senior Vice President and Chief Economist, American Council for Capital Formation; and, Dr. Jonathan Fielding Director, Los Angeles County Department of Health, National Association of County & City Health Officials.

Dr. Field of Stanford focused on the connection between climate change and extreme events. Specifically, he testified that: 1) overwhelming evidence establishes that climate change is real; 2) strong evidence indicates that some kinds of climate extremes are already changing; and 3) climate change leads to changes in the risk of extreme events that can lead to disasters. He cited several reports' findings, which have all concluded that "Climate change is occurring, is very likely caused primarily by the emission of greenhouse gases from human activities, and poses significant risks for a range of human and natural systems." (This comes from the 2011 Final Report of the US National Academy of Sciences, "America's Climate Choices" (National Research Council 2011).)

Dr. Field then testified on U.S. weather records, specifically daily high and low temperatures. According to his testimony, the U.S. has seen increasing record highs since 1990 without a corresponding increase or equal proportion in record lows, indicating overall warming. He stated that this warming is directly related to risk for extreme disasters. Fourteen such disasters, incurring billions of dollars in damage each, occurred in 2011 -- more than in any other year. While some disasters' connections to weather and warming are unclear, for other categories of climate and weather extremes, the pattern is known, he said. Dr. Field noted that this year the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) concluded, "climate change increases the risk of heat waves (90% or greater probability), heavy precipitation (66% or greater probability), and droughts (medium confidence) for most land areas."

Dr. Fielding, of the Los Angeles County Department of Health, focused his testimony on the fact that "climate change has serious and far-reaching health implications for present and future generations." It is "already changing the distribution of some infectious disease vectors," he said, and "threatens to increase the number of people suffering from death, disease and injury from heatwaves, floods, storms, fires and droughts." All of these instances "may also cause social disruption, economic decline, and displacement of populations, all of which may impact health substantially...[and] disproportionately burden some -- the very young and the elderly, the physically and mentally disabled, the poor...and other marginalized groups."
Dr. Fielding went on to state that "some local health departments have begun to increase their capacity to assess and address the health effects of climate change" by conducting internal needs and vulnerability assessments, training staff, involving diverse strategic partners and community members to incorporate health considerations into comprehensive climate adaptation plans, and integrating climate change considerations into emergency preparedness programs. But with the cut of 50,000 public health jobs since 2008, and with "approximately half of local health departments experiencing a reduction in workforce capacity during the second half of 2011 alone," many localities cannot do enough, he argued.

Other issues discussed included:
- how local health agencies are preparing, including examples from Los Angeles and several other cities and counties in the country.
- testimony that presented evidence that might suggest that climate models overestimate the response of temperature to greenhouse gas increases and also show a lack of evidence to blame humans for an increase in extreme events.
- the argument against "consensus science," which is often appealed to regarding arguments about climate change to bolster an assertion. Testimony that consensus, however, is a political notion, not a scientific notion and that IPCC and other similar assessments do not represent a consensus of much more than the consensus of those selected to agree with a particular consensus. The content of these climate reports is actually under the control of a relatively small number of individuals who act as gatekeepers of scientific opinion and information, rather than brokers, some witnesses stated.
- the argument that CO2 has immense benefits produced directly by CO2 or indirectly from its relationship to low-cost energy. For example, that CO2 is plant food and the world around us evolved when levels of CO2 were five to ten times what they are today. Essentially, today's green world is a consequence of atmospheric CO2 and food for plants means food for people. The extra CO2 being put into the atmosphere not only invigorates the biosphere, but also enhances the yields of our food crops.
- cautionary warnings that if the country deems it necessary to de-carbonize civilization's main energy sources, then compelling reasons beyond human-induced climate change need to be offered that must address, for example, ways to help poor countries develop affordable energy. According to some testimony, change alone is a weak leg on which to stand to justify a centrally planned, massive change in energy production, infrastructure and cost.
- testimony on some recent studies of the ocean, which are now showing how the climate is changing and contributing to the growing intensity of extreme weather events on land. In addition, testimony on sea level rise and its affects in the U.S.
- reminders that climate models are still in the development stage and the various models yield significantly different predictions about future temperature and precipitation. Accordingly, for companies, which rely on cost/benefit analysis to guide their investment decisions, a policy of "no regrets" will continue to shape their approach to adaptation to climate change.
- testimony that adapting to variations in the climate will be much easier for countries and businesses which have the resources to invest in new technology, new products and innovations across all sectors. Strong U.S. economic growth could be promoted through sound fiscal policies and a tax code that promotes economic growth with robust capital cost recovery rules, some witnesses argued.
- whether the U.S. should consider replacing the current income tax system with a consumed income tax, which is favorable to saving and investment, in addition to reducing regulatory and permitting barriers will also help restore much needed investment across all sectors.

For more information, go to:
Housing: Senate Subcommittee examines Streamlining Rental Housing Assistance

On August 1, 2012, the Senate Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Subcommittee on Housing, Transportation, and Community Development held a hearing titled Streamlining and Strengthening HUD's Rental Housing Assistance Programs.

Witnesses included: Mr. Keith Kinard, Executive Director, Newark Housing Authority; Ms. Dianne Hovdestad, Deputy Director, Sioux Falls Housing and Redevelopment Commission; Mr. Howard Husock, Vice President for Policy Research, Manhattan Institute; Mr. Will Fischer, Senior Policy Analyst, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities; and, Ms. Linda Couch, Senior Vice President for Policy and Research, National Low Income Housing Coalition.

Issues discussed included:
- Growth in the need for public housing assistance. Data shows there were 9.8 million extremely low income (ELI) (households with incomes less than 30% of area median) renter households in 2010 in the U.S. and only 5.5 million units renting at prices they could afford, resulting in an absolute gap of 4.3 million units affordable to ELI households. In 2009, this gap was 3.9 million units. Because higher income households rent some of the units that ELI households could afford, the gap of affordable and available units for ELI households in 2010 was 6.8 million; in 2009, it was 6.4 million
- The "Affordable Housing and Self-Sufficiency Improvement Act of 2012" (AHSSIA) being considered in the U.S. House of Representatives. AHSSIA is the latest iteration of recent endeavors to reform and advance the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher program. Certain core components in most versions of the reform proposals were discussed, including simplification of rental assistance administration; preservation of the housing stock; protection of tenants; and expansion of funding flexibilities and local decision-making for housing authorities.
- Belief that expansion and permanency of the Moving to Work (MTW) program is an essential element in strengthening the flexibility and local decision-making that housing authorities need to be successful in their communities. Additionally, belief that the Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) program will be critical in helping housing authorities reposition and strengthen an effective housing rental assistance delivery system for residents in a time of shrinking federal budgets.
- HUD Secretary Donovan's previous testimony that housing authorities in growing numbers were telling HUD that they would no longer be able to afford to run the voucher program -- including the highly praised Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) program that serves America's veterans.
- The impact on housing agencies of significant cuts in administrative fees over the past 10 years.
- Proposed changes to Housing Quality Standards and Property Inspection Protocols, income and rent determinations, funding policy, utility allowances, expansion of Family Self-Sufficiency Program (FSS), and access to HUD services by persons with limited English proficiency.
- How reforms can be structured to: simplify rules for setting tenant rent payments, while continuing to cap rents at 30 percent of a tenant's income; streamline voucher housing quality inspections to encourage private owners to participate in the program; establish a stable, fair voucher funding system to enable agencies to use funds more efficiently and better cope with shortfalls; allow more working poor families to qualify for vouchers by modestly raising income targeting limits; strengthen the Family Self-Sufficiency program, which offers housing assistance recipients job counseling and incentives to work and save; and provide added flexibility to "project-base" vouchers to support affordable housing.

For more information, go to: