

21st Century ROAD to Housing Act Becomes Law

The 21st Century ROAD to Housing Act [became law on July 11, 2026](#). This landmark bipartisan legislation takes meaningful steps to address the nation's housing shortage and improve access to affordable housing.

The legislation advances several priorities AIA has championed to help communities expand housing options and combines dozens of previously introduced bills aimed at addressing the affordability crisis. It sets policies to expand housing supply, streamline the construction of manufactured homes, and restrict large corporate investors from buying up single-family properties. Together, these reforms will help communities deliver more housing while creating new opportunities for architects to put their expertise to work.

There are several wins for the architectural community and AIA members that will likely expand the pipeline of projects, particularly in housing preservation, adaptive reuse, and new multifamily development

Key reforms include:

- Expanded use of Community Development Block Grant funding for housing construction.
- New tools to convert vacant and abandoned buildings into affordable housing.
- A seven-year “Innovation Fund” to help communities increase housing supply.
- Critical updates to the HOME Investment Partnerships Program.
- More efficient environmental review processes.
- New HUD-developed best practice framework for zoning and land-use policies.
- Higher multifamily loan limits that better reflect today's housing costs.
- New HUD program that will fund organizations to manage whole-home repairs that improve accessibility, resilience, and energy efficiency.
- A directive to HUD to review the implementation of Build America, Buy America Act (BABA) requirements and to update its guidance to clarify these requirements for HOME-funded projects.

As implementation begins, AIA will continue advocating for policies that help the affordable housing community comply with BABA, increase housing supply, support architects, and help communities create more affordable, sustainable, and resilient places to live.

AIA Convenes Disaster Risk Roundtable

On July 13, AIA hosted the Designing for Risk: Resilient Housing, Insurability, and Restoration Policy Roundtables at GCAD to bring together leaders from Congress, federal agencies, industry, insurers, resilience experts, and the design community for closed-door discussions on housing affordability, disaster resilience, adaptive reuse, insurability, and building modernization-including land restoration, decarbonization, permitting and historic preservation. U.S. Representative Kathy Castor (D-FL) opened the event with remarks reflecting on Hurricanes Helene and Milton, helping frame the need for stronger, more resilient communities. Participants explored policy solutions to reduce risk, lower costs, and strengthen the built environment while highlighting the vital role architects and designers play in advancing resilient and sustainable development.

OMB Revisions on Financial Assistance

AIA submitted comments on [OMB's proposed overhaul of the Uniform Guidance for federal financial assistance](#) (the way the government gives out federal grants). The proposed revisions would:

- Establish a new, highly centralized framework for political and policy oversight of federal grants and cooperative agreements, shifting discretion from program experts to OMB and senior political appointees across agencies.
- Rewrites standards on merit review, cost principles, and compliance, increasing federal control over award selection and administration and expanding grounds for suspension, termination, or non-renewal of assistance.
- Introduces broad, outcome- and “priority alignment”-based criteria that allow agencies to condition funding on alignment with the president’s agenda or other cross-government priorities.

AIA expressed concern that these revisions would:

- Inject substantial political and administrative uncertainty into long-term grant-funded projects,
- Generate unpredictable award decisions and increased termination/suspension risk will destabilize multi-year HUD capital and operating grants, making it harder for cities, PHAs, and design teams to plan and finance rehabilitation, new construction, and climate-resilient retrofits,
- Politicize criteria that could skew HUD portfolios away from locally defined resilience needs (e.g., flood, heat, and seismic mitigation in specific jurisdictions),
- Increase compliance complexity and subjective “priority” tests will raise transaction costs and delay project starts, discouraging smaller jurisdictions and mission-driven developers from pursuing HUD funds.

AIA Represented at the International Union of Architects World Congress

A delegation of AIA and Alliance Organizations leadership represented the American architectural profession at the [International Union of Architects World Congress & General Assembly in Barcelona, Spain](#). The delegation spent the week connecting with architects from around the world, discussing critical issues facing the profession, and recognizing the importance of quality leadership.

The AIA delegation included: AIA President Illya Azaroff, FAIA; AIA President-Elect Yiselle Santos Rivera, AIA; EVP/Chief Executive Officer Carole Wege, FAIA; National Organization of Minority Architects President Bryan C. Lee Jr., NOMA, FAIA; American Institute of Architecture Students Vice-President Patricia Negrón Meléndez, NOMAS, AIAS; AIA International President Segene Park, AIA; Pascale Sablan, FAIA; and Derek Washam, Sr. Director of International Affairs.

In addition to participating in the triennial business meeting, AIA engaged in numerous events throughout the Congress including meeting between AIA’s delegation and the Architects’ Council of Europe executive board, hosting a convening for international association presidents and executives to continue dialogue initiated at the AIA26 International Presidents’ Forum, and [Yiselle presenting AIA’s work on gender equity](#) as part of a global dialogue hosted by the Royal Institute of British Architects. AIA also showcased the value of AIA membership in an exhibition at the Congress.