

**COLLEGIATE HOUSING AND INFRASTRUCTURE ACT (H.R. 1449/S. 654)**  
*College Affordability Starts with More Affordable Not-for Profit Student Housing*

**The Collegiate Housing and Infrastructure Act (CHIA) makes college more affordable for students, creates thousands of small business jobs nationwide, improves campus safety and reduces long-term student debt.** CHIA eliminates an arbitrary distinction in the current tax code that allows colleges and universities to use charitable contributions to build and maintain student housing but prevents other not-for-profit student housing entities from doing the same. CHIA is one of the most cost-effective solutions to the college affordability crisis and enjoys a strong measure of bipartisan support.

In the interest of fairness to students, federal tax policy should not distinguish between charitable contributions made to colleges and universities for infrastructure improvements and gifts made to other not-for-profit entities for the same purpose. Permitting providers of not-for-profit student housing, like fraternities and sororities, to utilize charitable contributions for housing infrastructure projects would allow us to make critical property improvements to our \$3 billion of affordable housing nationwide that is currently home to 250,000 students.

**Reasons to support CHIA:**

- **Room and board costs outweigh tuition costs at most public universities so reducing long-term student loan debt must include limiting costs and improving conditions for not-for-profit housing to thrive.** The not-for-profit student housing industry is home to several hundred thousand students nationwide and plays a vital role at a time when public universities lack the financial capacity to house all of their students in state-owned facilities. Passing CHIA means more not-for-profit student housing will be built, improved or maintained in the future, saving students billions in potential student loan costs going forward.
- **Fraternities and sororities often lack the financial capacity to make critical safety improvements to existing housing stock.** Life-safety upgrades are a top challenge facing our housing as only 50% of our housing has fire sprinklers. Our smaller and older living spaces have twice the injury rate of other campus housing in fires and significantly higher rates of property losses. About three fires occur each week in fraternity and sorority facilities and 80% of fatalities in student housing fires since 2000 have occurred in off-campus housing. Damage costs incurred due to these types of fires are approximately 80% lower when the property is protected by a sprinkler system. Installing automatic sprinkler systems saves lives - there has never been a fire-related fatality in fraternal housing that has sprinklers. Our housing can be up to 100 years old and retrofitting for fire sprinklers can cost as much as \$400,000. CHIA will provide a way for not-for-profit organizations to raise the funds needed to make their housing safer and better for future generations of students.
- **The ability to use charitable contributions for housing infrastructure will support small businesses and the construction industry.** The fraternity and sorority community alone has identified over \$1 billion in capital improvement projects that would commence shortly after the passage of CHIA. These projects translate into dollars spent to hire plumbers, roofers, carpenters, electricians, contractors and other individuals working in the construction industry. Given that the not-for-profit student housing industry is broader than just our community, passing CHIA would provide a meaningful long-term impact on small business job creation while improving the condition of not-for-profit student housing for future generations of students.
- **CHIA is a rare bill that costs very little, has a big impact, and enjoys strong bipartisan and bicameral support.** CHIA was scored at just \$148 million over ten years and will generate a torrent of small business activity that creates jobs nationwide. CHIA has also been endorsed by the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU), the Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC), the National Fire Sprinkler Association (NFSA), and over 90 individual colleges and universities across the country. 197 current representatives and 32 Senators are past sponsors of CHIA, making this one of the most popular tax code reforms in the last several sessions of Congress.

**To become a sponsor of the Collegiate Housing and Infrastructure Act of 2013,** please contact Preston Kerr in Congressman Pete Sessions's office (225-1579) in the House OR Ross Nodurft in Senator Mary Landrieu's office (224-5824) in the Senate.