

SAGE BLOG

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SAGE Blog

SAGE (Services and Advocacy for GLBT Elders) is the country's largest and oldest organization dedicated to improving the lives of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) older adults.

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FEBRUARY 18, 2015

TAKING OUR HOUSING INITIATIVE TO THE WHITE HOUSE

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As the number of Americans age 65 and older surges over the next few decades, the number of LGBT older adults is estimated to double to 3 million by 2030. By this year – 2015 – one in two individuals who are HIV positive in this country will be over age 50. Many struggle to find welcoming and affordable housing.

On Tuesday, February 10, 2015, the White House, SAGE, and the National Center for Lesbian Rights (NCLR) hosted the National LGBT Elder Housing Summit.



(L-R) Kathy Greenlee, U.S. Assistant Secretary of Aging, Michael Adams, Executive Director, SAGE and Nora Super, Executive Director of the White House Conference on Aging

We looked at the National LGBT Elder Housing Summit as a unique opportunity for the White House to bring together the LGBT community and the aging network to discuss the challenges communities across the country have faced in providing affordable, welcoming, and supportive housing to LGBT older adults and older adults with HIV. The summit also provided an opportunity to hear from panelists from Washington and across the nation to see how they have successfully begun to meet those challenges. And together, with an eye towards the future, we explored how federal housing policy and those at the state and local level can shape how we address these challenges in the years to come.

The day included a number of panels, with participation by experts from across the country, including panels entitled:

- Overview of the Housing Needs of LGBT Elders and the Importance of Training Providers
- Building Housing - LGBT Older Adult Community Housing
- Educating Consumers on the Legal Landscape Regarding Housing Rights for LGBT Older Adults. How to Find—and Advocate for—LGBT-Friendly Housing in all its Forms

- Expanding Services - Best Practices in Services and Programs that Support LGBT Older People with their Housing Challenges
- Changing Policy – Creating Housing, Financial Security, and an Inclusive Safety Net


We had the pleasure of hearing Jennifer Ho, Senior Advisor on Housing and Services, US Department of Housing and Urban Development, deliver a keynote address on HUD’s interest in providing welcoming and affordable housing.

And we had the opportunity to host a White House Conference on Aging Listening Session, conducted by Kathy Greenlee, Administrator of the Administration for Community Living and Assistant Secretary for Aging, and Nora Super, Executive Director, White House Conference on Aging. LGBT older adults and advocates shared their vision of a successful White House Conference on Aging directly with Administrator Greenlee and Executive Director Super.

In sum, the day provided a unique opportunity for advocates to share their thoughts with policy makers, and for policy makers to share their latest thoughts with individuals both personally and professionally invested in improving the housing security of LGBT older adults.

Posted by SAGEUSA at 10:25:13 AM in [Conferences](#), [Housing](#), [Politics](#)
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Before Michael Adams was at Sage, there was the recognition of the discrimination of LGBT seniors in housing. A survey was conducted by the board. The conclusion was that LGBT seniors in New York City preferred to remain in their apartments than move to LGBT senior housing. As I had thought otherwise, it was a surprise to me. I never saw the wording of the survey and the breadth of the survey. Is this uniquely New York as other cities have created housing for LGBT seniors. About a quarter of a million dollars had been collect and there were other pledges for the initiative before the board decided that it was neither feasible nor needed.


That Sage sees this as a need for LGBT seniors is a hopeful sign. It is good to see the possible government involvement in creating LGBT senior housing. Fifteen years ago, the thought of developing senior housing for the LGBT community appeared to be a herculean project. Nonetheless, it needed to be tackled as I think that it does now. Fortunately, the political atmosphere is more sympathetic to the needs of our community. It will still be difficult given the rise in real estate prices. I know that this will not deter SAGE.

DICK STERNBERG

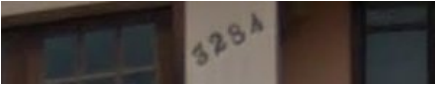
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