



Understanding the 'Lost Generation' of Housing in Alaska's Tribal Communities

**Commonwealth North Forum on
Alaska's Housing Shortage**

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About AAHA



**Federal and state
advocacy**

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Role of RHAs in Alaska

- Authorized in the 1970s by Alaska Legislature (18.55.996)
- 14 RHAs serve as Tribally-designated housing entities (TDHEs) for 201 Tribes under the **Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act of 1996 (NAHASDA)**



Each region is different

- RHAs vary greatly in size and programs offered, serving between 1 and 52 Tribes each
- Several dozen Tribes unaffiliated with regional housing authorities operate their own HUD-assisted programs



What is NAHASDA?

- Landmark 1996 federal law that reformed Native housing assistance
- Replaced older, rigid HUD programs with flexible block grants (IHBG program) to emphasize self-determination and tribal sovereignty
- Allows individual tribes to decide how to use funds based on local needs, whether that means building new rental units, offering homebuyer assistance, rehabbing older homes, assisting elders, etc.
- IHBG program is single largest source of federal funding for affordable housing in Native communities and HUD's largest investment in Alaska

What holds NAHASDA back today?

- NAHASDA has not been reauthorized by Congress since 2008 – while funding has remained steady, this creates great uncertainty for developers
- Process and legal barriers, such as overly complex environmental reviews, unfunded mandate of Build America Buy America Act (BABA) compliance for multifamily developers, further stress existing capacity constraints

Opinion: As a Native American housing act turns 30, it's time to build what comes next

By Griffin Forster and Rudy Soto
Published: April 13, 2026

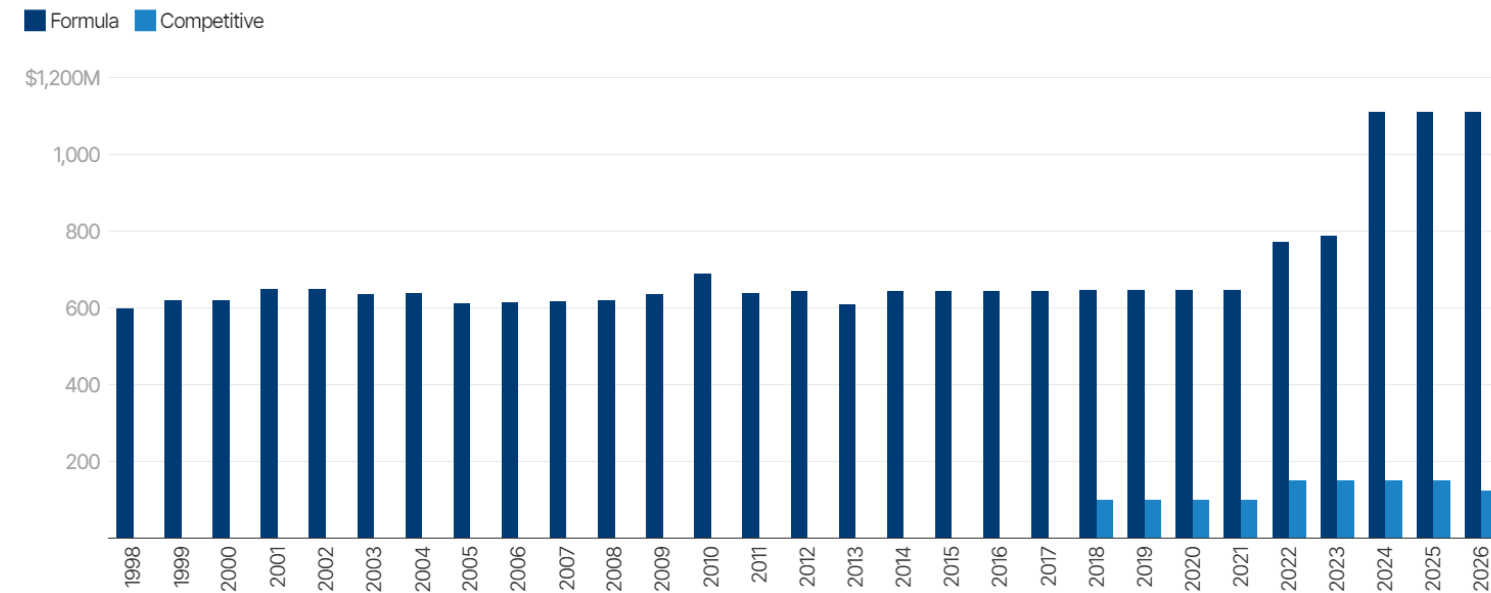


Lights of the South Anchorage Hillside are visible before sunrise on February 4, 2026. (Marc Lester / ADN)

Lost generation of IHBG funding

- IHBG dropped from 2.5% to 1.5% of HUD total budget over decades of flat appropriations
- From 2000-2023, IHBG lost over 30% of its purchasing power to inflation
- 2024 appropriations returned IHBG to inflation-adjusted level last seen in the year 2000

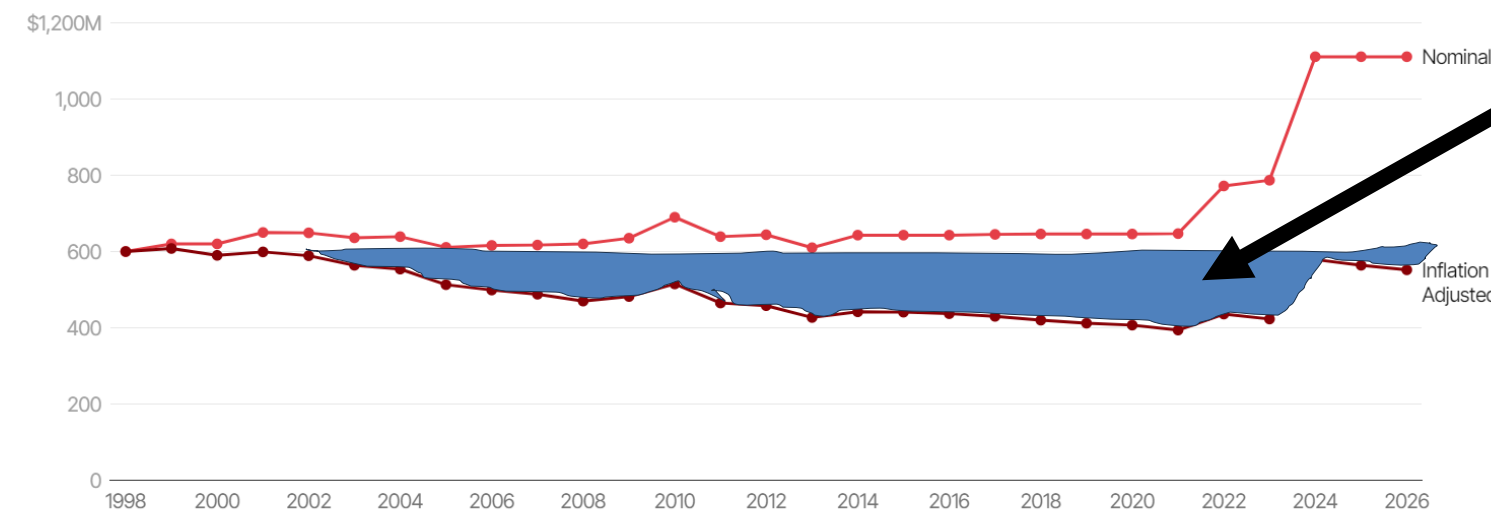
IHBG Funding by Year (FY1998-FY2026)



Note: Additional funding was appropriated by the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act of 2020 and the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) of 2021 (not included above).

Source: Congressional Research Service

IHBG Formula Funding by Year (FY1998-FY2026)



Note: Based on author's calculations using Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers from the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis.

Source: Congressional Research Service



Brevig Mission shows us result



How RHAs are responding



Support and develop the next generation of Tribal housing leaders

Focus on shared capacity and economies of scale



Elevate housing as a key to economic development

Innovation and partnerships that drive *real* savings



Kodiak 25-unit self-help project



KODIAK ISLAND HOUSING AUTHORITY

 Koniag



RurAL CAP
Rural Alaska Community Action Program, Inc.



Arctic Slope military airlift



NEWS



UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

Kentucky Air Guard helps alleviate arctic housing shortage with airlift mission to North Slope

Published Dec. 23, 2024

By Tech. Sgt. Chloe Ochs

123rd Airlift Wing Public Affairs

JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska - Thirty-six Airmen from the Kentucky National Guard conducted Operation Arctic Haven here Aug. 30 to Sept. 6, airlifting 39 tons of residential building supplies to the North Slope of Alaska to support local communities in need.



Questions?



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