

Cummings Fights to Keep Americans in their Homes

More than 3 million homes across the country will be foreclosed on this year, signaling a nationwide housing crisis that threatens our nation's economic recovery.

Ranking Member Elijah E. Cummings has been at the forefront of congressional efforts to investigate abuses by mortgage servicing companies and work with housing regulators to implement reforms that will keep more Americans in their homes. On [October 27](#), Cummings was honored as "Federal Champion of the Year" by the Maryland Consumer Rights Coalition for his efforts to address the foreclosure crisis and promote the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau.

Below are Cummings's recent initiatives to address the foreclosure crisis and how they have resulted in housing reforms.

Keeping Servicemembers in their Homes

- **Request:** On [September 27](#), Cummings, along with 11 other Members, wrote to federal housing regulators requesting a review of challenges facing servicemembers who are forced to relocate for the military and risk losing their homes.
- **Action:** On September 29, in response to Cummings's letter, the Department of Treasury announced changes to its Home Affordable Foreclosure Alternatives (HAFA) Program that will help servicemembers who are forced to move.
 - As a result, Holly Petraeus, the Director of the Office of Servicemember Affairs at the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB), [praised Cummings](#) for spearheading congressional efforts to help military families avoid foreclosure.

Helping Responsible Homeowners

- **Request:** Cummings spearheaded efforts to hold meetings between the Federal Housing Finance Agency (FHFA) and Members of Congress to discuss steps to implement President Obama's mortgage refinance proposal which would help responsible homeowners refinance their mortgages at historically lower rates.
 - On [September 13](#) and [September 9](#), Cummings, along with several Members, wrote to FHFA seeking a meeting with agency officials to discuss the President's plan.
 - On [September 15](#), Cummings, and more than two dozen Members, sent a letter to FHFA Acting Director Ed DeMarco expressing "profound frustration with the apparent lack of urgency shown by your agency and by agencies within the Administration in addressing the foreclosure crisis" and requesting a meeting with him directly.

- **Action:** On [October 6](#), Cummings led a meeting with DeMarco and 16 other Members to discuss President Obama’s mortgage refinance proposal.
 - When it became evident that DeMarco did not yet have a plan ready to share, Cummings asked him to return before the end of the month with a comprehensive proposal.
 - The following day, on [October 7](#), Cummings, along with 26 other Members wrote to President Obama requesting a meeting with the highest ranking Administration officials that coordinate housing and foreclosure policy to discuss the President’s mortgage refinancing proposal, and calling on the President to nominate a new, permanent Director to lead FHFA.
- **Action:** On [October 24](#), FHFA announced changes to the Home Affordable Refinance Program (HARP), which will help “underwater” homeowners take advantage of today’s record-low interest rates. The changes are a result of concerns expressed by Cummings and other Members in the meeting with DeMarco.
- **Request:** On [August 1](#), Cummings wrote to Members of the FHFA Oversight Board proposing a twelve month extension on the forbearance period for unemployed homeowners with mortgages owned or guaranteed by Freddie Mac.
- **Action:** On [September 29](#), FHFA decided to extend from three months to six months the forbearance period for unemployed homeowners

Rooting Out Foreclosure Abuse

- **Request:** On [October 3](#), the FHFA Inspector General released a report requested by Cummings that revealed a prolonged failure by FHFA and Fannie Mae to adequately oversee law firms processing foreclosures as part of Fannie Mae’s Retained Attorney Network. Cummings raised serious concerns with the report’s findings, requesting that FHFA provide various documents and calling on the agency to consider terminating the program.
- **Action:** On [October 18](#), FHFA instructed Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac to begin “transitioning away” from their use of designated foreclosure attorney networks to a system under which “mortgage servicers select qualified law firms that meet certain minimum, uniform criteria.”