



Talking Points on Key Housing Issues

May 2026

The following talking points help tell the residential construction industry story to the media, policymakers, NAHB members, local/civic organizations and consumers.

Key NAHB Housing Issues

1. **Industry Pulse Check.** NAHB is engaged in the largest listening and learning endeavor in its history. We are seeking feedback from members, EOs and industry professionals so that NAHB can invest in future programs, education and member benefits.
2. **Key Wins Early in 2026.** NAHB has scored important victories during the first four months of the year, including an announcement by HUD and USDA that they are rescinding the 2021 IECC mandate, passage of the Housing for the 21st Century Act, and President Trump's executive orders on housing to remove regulatory barriers and provide better access to mortgage credit.
3. **A Strong Presence on Capitol Hill to Start the Year.** NAHB continues to act as the voice of the housing industry in Congress. NAHB Senior Officers Bill Owens and Bob Peterson met with more than 20 lawmakers and urged them to focus on regulatory and workforce development issues to ease housing costs; 2025 Chairman Buddy Hughes testified before Congress calling on lawmakers to eliminate excessive regulations; and the entire NAHB Government Affairs team met with nearly 50 House offices in a single day urging swift passage of the Energy Choice Act.
4. **Save the Date!** The 2026 NAHB Legislative Conference, the most important lobbying event of the year, will take place in Washington, D.C. on Wednesday, June 10. Learn more at nabh.org/legcon.
5. **Canadian Lumber Duties Expected to Drop This Summer.** The U.S. Commerce Department has signaled that it plans to lower combined antidumping and countervailing duties on Canadian lumber imports from roughly 35% to 25% in mid-August.
6. **Iran War Adds to Economic Headwinds.** The ongoing war with Iran continues to affect energy prices and interest rates. These factors are affecting the home building sector, as 70% of builders recently reported challenges pricing homes due to changing cost parameters.
7. **Housing Market Snapshot:** Single-family and multifamily starts posted monthly gains in March along with new home sales while existing home sales registered a monthly decline. Builder confidence in April registered a four-point decline to 34 from a reading of 38 in March.

NAHB's Blueprint to 100 Begins with the Industry Pulse Check

- NAHB's [Blueprint to 100](#) is a bold, forward-looking initiative to meet association and members' needs as NAHB approaches its 100th anniversary.
- The [Industry Pulse Check](#) is the first step of Blueprint 100, designed to gather insights from members, EOs and industry professionals.
- The Industry Pulse Check captures real-world insights from builders, remodelers and industry professionals to inform critical decisions on membership, resources and advocacy.
- [Feedback from the Pulse Check](#) will guide key decisions on future NAHB investments in programs, education and member benefits.
- In short, your voice will directly shape how NAHB evolves to better support you and your business, today and in the future.
- All members who complete the Industry Pulse Check have the option to be entered into a random drawing for a chance to win a:
 - \$200 Amazon gift card.
 - Trip to the 2027 NAHB International Builders' Show® (IBS) in Las Vegas, Feb 2–4, 2027.
- In addition, EOs with strong participation from their association members will have the chance to earn a business grant for their HBAs so that they can reinvest directly back to their members.
- Visit blueprint.nahb.org to complete the Industry Pulse Check.

Key Wins to Start the Year

- NAHB scores important key wins in early 2026.
 - HUD and USDA on May 1 [announced](#) they are rescinding a requirement that imposed the 2021 IECC and the 2019 ASHRAE 90.1 as the minimum energy-efficiency standards for certain single-family and multifamily housing programs. This is a major victory for NAHB and housing affordability.

Since the [rule was initially finalized](#) under the Biden administration in April 2024, NAHB has worked tirelessly on the legal, regulatory and legislative fronts to ensure HUD and USDA's 2021 IECC mandate was never implemented.

This includes a legal victory in a [case brought by NAHB and 15 states](#), in which a ruling by the U.S. federal court in Texas prevented HUD and USDA from implementing this mandate.

Studies show that adoption of these energy efficiency standards will add between \$9,600 and \$21,400 to the price of a new home depending on the climate zone.

- President Trump on March 13 issued [two executive orders](#) on housing to [remove regulatory barriers](#) and provide [better access to mortgage credit](#) that will help ease the nation's housing affordability crisis. NAHB looks forward to working with the administration to implement these important directives.
- The House on Feb. 9 passed the [Housing for the 21st Century Act](#), NAHB-supported legislation that contains key provisions related to land-use and zoning, regulatory reforms and financing tools. NAHB is urging the House to [seek a conference](#) to hammer out differences with the Senate-passed 21st Century Road to Housing Act.

Specifically, NAHB is calling on House lawmakers to ensure the final package allows the construction of new rental housing by **striking the government mandate that forces investors to sell purpose-built single-family rentals.**

- At NAHB's urging, the National Labor Relations Board has [restored the 2020 joint employer standard](#). The revision rescinds a 2023 regulation that established a broad new test significantly lowering the standard for joint employer status under the National Labor Relations Act.
- Congressional appropriators agreed to [fully fund Job Corps](#) at \$1.76 billion in fiscal year 2026 after House appropriators last year proposed to slash funding by 50% to \$880 million. Job Corps is a vital source of skilled labor for the housing industry.
- The House on Feb. 25 approved the [Homeowner Energy Freedom Act](#), legislation championed by NAHB. The bill would repeal burdensome provisions from the Inflation Reduction Act, including a provision that provides states \$1 billion to incentivize the adoption of the 2021 International Energy Conservation Code.

A Strong Presence on Capitol Hill

- NAHB continues to act as the voice of housing in the halls of Congress.
- NAHB Chairman Bill Owens and First Vice Chairman Bob Peterson on Feb. 4-5 [met with nearly two dozen influential lawmakers](#) and urged them to focus on regulatory and workforce development issues to help stem rising housing costs.
- 2025 Chairman Buddy Hughes testified before Congress on Jan. 22 and [called on lawmakers to eliminate excessive regulations](#) that are preventing builders from increasing the housing supply.

- In an unprecedented move to advance legislation vital to NAHB members, every member of the NAHB Government Affairs team on Feb. 10 fanned out across Capitol Hill urging House lawmakers to bring the [Energy Choice Act](#) quickly to a vote on the House floor. Your Government Affairs team met with nearly 50 House offices to seek prompt action on legislation that would prevent state or local governments from banning the use of gas in homes and buildings.
- NAHB Chief Lobbyist Lake Coulson on Jan. 14 participated in a [Housing Affordability Roundtable](#) hosted by the New Democrat Coalition. Lawmakers and housing stakeholders discussed ways to address affordability challenges and enact federal housing finance reforms.
- And in this pivotal election year, NAHB is working tirelessly to ensure that housing remains a top national priority by working to elect pro-housing, pro-business candidates in the 2026 midterm elections.
- Looking back to 2025, NAHB achieved [significant advocacy wins](#) that positively impacted the housing industry and our members. View the [full report](#) by logging on [nahb.org](#) and typing “2025 Advocacy Victories” in the search bar at the top of the page.

NAHB Legislative Conference Set for June 10

- Our clout on Capitol Hill begins right here with you – our grassroots.
- And that’s why it’s important to spread the word now that the single biggest grassroots event of the year – the NAHB Legislative Conference – will take place in Washington, D.C. on Wednesday, June 10 in conjunction with the Spring Leadership Meeting.
- This is a unique opportunity to speak one-on-one with your federal lawmakers and to push for housing policies that will help your business and our industry.
- To prepare you for your Hill visits, NAHB’s lobbying team on June 9 from 4-5 p.m. will walk through key policy priorities, messaging tips and what to expect in meetings. The session will conclude with state-based breakouts, giving you the opportunity to connect with your region and align on key messages for your Hill visits. Learn more at [nahb.org/legcon](#).
- The Spring Leadership Meeting will also feature an advocacy general session and regulatory townhalls on Thursday, June 11 from 10 a.m.-12 p.m. Hear directly from key Trump administration officials as they discuss NAHB’s top policy priorities and the latest developments impacting the housing industry.
- Following the general session, engage in interactive town halls with regulators focused on NAHB’s most critical advocacy issues, offering members the opportunity to gain insights, ask questions, and better understand the evolving regulatory landscape.

- Learn more and register for the Spring Leadership Meeting at nahb.org/slm.

Canadian Lumber Duties Expected to Drop This Summer

- The U.S. Department of Commerce has signaled that it plans to [lower antidumping and countervailing tariffs](#) later this year on imports of Canadian softwood lumber products from the current rate of about 35.16% to 24.83% following its annual review of existing tariffs.
- Commerce indicated that [it would set antidumping duties at 10.66%](#) vs. the current rate of 20.56% and [countervailing duties at 14.17%](#) (currently 14.63%), bringing the combined rate down from 35.16% to 24.83%.
- The lower rates are expected to go into effect in mid-August.
- Also on the tariff front, the Supreme Court on Feb. 20 ruled that President Trump's attempts to use emergency powers under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA) was not valid.
- However, Trump still has wide latitude in setting tariff policy.
- Moreover, the Supreme Court's ruling does not reverse duties imposed under other statutory authorities available to the president. This includes the combined 35% antidumping and countervailing duties on Canadian softwood lumber that are expected to drop this summer, the 10% global Section 232 tariff on softwood lumber, and the 50% global Section 232 tariff on steel and aluminum imports.
- This tariff uncertainty, along with [whether importers and businesses that paid tariffs under IEEPA can receive up to \\$175 billion in refunds](#), leaves tariff policy in a state of chaos that will likely result in additional, complex litigation.
- Meanwhile, more than 60% of builders surveyed by NAHB have reported seeing higher costs due to tariffs.
- With the nation facing a housing affordability crisis, [NAHB continues to urge the president to exempt building materials](#) as part of his tariff strategy because they raise construction costs, impede supply chains and result in market and business uncertainty that make it difficult for builders to price their homes.
- On the legislative front, NAHB worked with Sens. Jacky Rosen (D-Nev.) and Chris Coons (D-Del.) to introduce the [Housing Tariff Exclusion Act](#). The bill would address the housing affordability crisis by creating an exemption process for building materials from tariffs.

Iran War Adds to Headwinds

- The ongoing war with Iran continues to affect energy prices and interest rates. Oil prices remain elevated in the \$90 to \$100 barrel range. The 10-year Treasury rate remains above 4.3%, while the 30-year fixed rate mortgage averaged 6.23% at the end of April.
- These factors are affecting the home building sector. The [NAHB/Wells Fargo Housing Market Index](#) (HMI) fell back four points to a low level of 34 in April.
- According to the HMI, 62% of builders reported higher material costs due to increase gas/diesel prices, and 70% of builders reported challenges pricing homes due to changing cost parameters.
- The housing affordability crisis continues to affect prospective home buyers. In March, existing home sales declined 3.6% to a 3.98 million seasonally adjust annual rate — the lowest level since June 2025. On a year-over-year basis, sales were 1% lower than a year ago.
- On an optimistic note, a [recent survey from NAHB](#) shows that the share of young adults interested in a career in the construction trades has doubled within the last decade (from 3% to 6%). The survey suggests possible growth for the construction labor market in the years ahead.

Housing Market Snapshot			
Latest Data: March 2026 (as of 05/05/26)			
Housing Starts	Current Value	Monthly Change	Yearly Change
Single-family:	1.03 million AR	9.7%	8.9%
Multifamily:	470,000 AR	13.3%	15.5%
Median SF Home Price			
New:	\$384,000	-6.6%	-6.3%
Existing:	\$420,700	0.0%	1.3%
SF Home Sales			
New:	682,000 AR	7.4%	3.3%
Existing:	3.63 million AR	-3.5%	-03%

All data is seasonally-adjusted, AR = Annual Rate, SF = Single-Family
 Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, National Association of Realtors, tabulated by NAHB

[NAHB/Wells Fargo Housing Market Index](#) – The index, which measures builder confidence in the market for newly built single-family homes, was 34 in April, down four points from March. Any number below 50 indicates that more builders view sales conditions as poor than good.

NAHB Chief Economist Robert Dietz’s analysis: “Builder sentiment has fallen back in spring as buyers face ongoing elevated interest rates and growing economic uncertainty. While risks with respect to the Iran war, energy costs, and declines for consumer confidence have slowed the market, single-family housing starts did show a solid rebound in March. This suggests builders are responding to pockets of improving demand despite ongoing affordability challenges. But with near-term economic risks elevated, 70% of builders reported challenges pricing homes given uncertainty about material costs.”