

Lebanon County Housing Collaborative

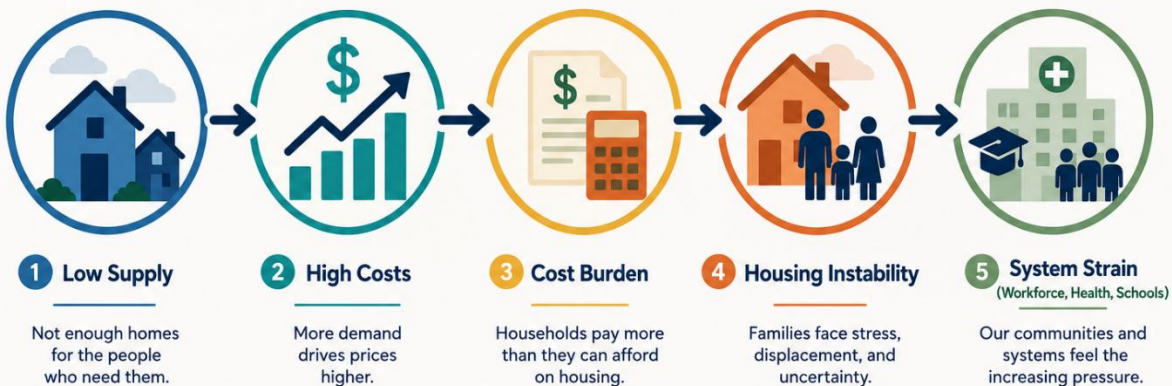
Written Testimony

The Lebanon County Housing Collaborative serves as a countywide coordination and planning initiative focused on housing stability, housing development, and cross-sector collaboration. Our work connects municipalities, developers, nonprofits, housing authorities, employers, healthcare systems, and service providers to strengthen Lebanon County's housing pipeline and improve access to housing across income levels.

Some of the key housing challenges that Lebanon and other counties are facing include: Limited availability of housing across multiple price points and housing types, little or no housing availability for people exiting crisis situations, increasing development costs and regulatory barriers impacting housing production, growing pressure on Seniors, First Time Homebuyers and those on a fixed or low income. Additionally, a lack of housing diversity in many communities, particularly smaller-scale multifamily and mixed-use options are contributing to the on-going housing shortfall across the commonwealth.

Compounding Pressures

— A CHALLENGE IN CREATION, A BURDEN ON ALL. —



Addressing housing today breaks the cycle
for a stronger tomorrow.

Real World Impact Story

“City Living & The Shrinking Middle Class”

Household Type: Rental Apartment

Employment: Two-income household with two jobs each (four total): one primarily in health care and one in the federal government, plus two side jobs to help cover expenses.

Income: \$125,000 annually.

Housing Challenge: Even with four jobs between them, these two young adults, both with master’s degrees, remain trapped in a substandard rental unit with inadequate air conditioning and poor insulation because housing costs are simply out of reach. They work more than 80 hours a week, live carefully, and carry little debt beyond student loans. Yet despite doing nearly everything right, they are still years away from affording a home and have little chance of securing a better rental in an already constrained housing market.

**Housing instability is
not just an economic issue—
it is a generational issue
affecting children and families.**



15,000+
people live in poverty
in our county



1 in 6
children live in poverty
in our county



When we invest in stable housing,
we invest in stronger futures.



Policy Recommendations

1. Support Flexible Local Zoning Tools

Encourage municipalities to adopt zoning approaches that expand housing choice while maintaining community character, including:

- Accessory dwelling units (ADUs)
- Duplexes, triplexes, and quadplexes
- Mixed-use development
- Upper-floor residential conversions
- Adaptive reuse of existing buildings

2. Expand Housing Supply Across Income Levels

Lebanon County needs a broader range of housing options — including workforce housing, senior housing, starter homes, and affordable rental units — to meet changing demographic and economic needs.

Strategies and policies that help reduce unnecessary development barriers and improve project feasibility can support additional housing production.

3. Strengthen Public-Private Partnerships

Housing challenges require coordination across sectors.

Continued collaboration between municipalities, developers, employers, nonprofits, housing authorities, healthcare systems, and state partners can help:

- Identify development-ready opportunities
- Improve access to funding resources
- Align infrastructure and housing planning
- Support long-term community stability

4. Prioritize Housing Preservation and Upstream Prevention

Preserving existing housing stock and helping residents remain housed is often more cost-effective than responding after housing instability occurs.

Policies that support:

- home repair programs,
- eviction prevention,
- landlord engagement,
- flexible emergency assistance,
- and coordinated referral systems can help reduce displacement and homelessness pressures.

5. Support Housing Education and Community Dialogue

Housing conversations are often shaped by misunderstanding and misinformation.

Expanding community education efforts through public engagement, visual tools, data storytelling, and constructive local dialogue can help communities better understand:

- the role of different housing types,
- the connection between housing and workforce stability,
- and the long-term economic impact of housing availability.

Closing

Housing challenges cannot be solved through one program or one sector alone. Long-term progress will require coordinated partnerships, practical local solutions, and policies that support both housing stability and responsible housing growth.



Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this important issue.