

Welcome to the Spring 2026 issue of The State Affairs Newsletter. This issue highlights the fantastic America's Housing Comeback convening in Orlando, the Defenders of Housing, big housing pushes in the 2026 sessions and new land use tools from NAHB. Thank you for subscribing to The State Affairs.

## America's Housing Comeback

### Elected Officials, Planners and Builders Chart Workforce Solutions to Boost Housing Affordability

The NAHB State and Local team brought together mayors, city leaders, planners and builders during the 2026 International Builders' Show in Orlando to address workforce development challenges affecting housing affordability. The full-day event was part of the America's Housing Comeback (AHC) discussion series, led by the National League of Cities (NLC) and the American Planning Association (APA).

City leaders heard directly from builders about the mounting challenges they face with recruitment and retention not only for trades professionals but also public sector staffing.

Ed Brady, CEO of the Home Builders Institute (HBI), and Emily Price, HBI SVP of development and partnership engagement, outlined how HBI programming strengthens city workforces. They gave specific examples of effective public-private sector partnerships.

Danushka Nanayakkara-Skillington, an NAHB economist, reinforced the message by providing data and analysis of how labor market conditions and demographic trends affect housing development. She explained that weak job growth, low workforce participation, and a significant slowdown in population growth harm the labor market. Specifically, home builders are facing persistent labor shortages, with [nearly 225,000 job openings](#) in the construction industry in March 2026.

Residential construction hiring is one aspect of the workforce challenge. NAHB's Nick Julian, Zack Packard and Jeff Pemstein and Sue Schwartz, president of the APA, spoke about the workforce shortages across roles, from planners and building inspectors to specialized legal and technical staff. Each speaker provided practical solutions to reduce risks and minimize delays, from third-party contracting to shared staffing and self-certification for licensed professionals.

The program concluded with a presentation by the [Home Builders Association of Greater Kansas City](#). The association's '[Let Builders Build](#)' public awareness campaign revealed how public sentiment can shift to support pro-growth policies when messaging focuses on the value of homeownership.



NAHB hosted mayors, city planners, local elected officials and members during the America's Housing Comeback workforce convening held in Orlando during the 2026 International Builders' Show.

---

Home builders are facing persistent labor shortages, with **nearly 225,000 job openings** in the construction industry in March 2026.