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For Immediate Release

Registration is open for PHFA's May housing conference

Keynote speaker Dr. Ira Goldstein will release new research conducted during the pandemic uncovering barriers to homeownership in Pa. for people of color

HARRISBURG – The Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency's Housing Forum planned for mid-May includes two keynote speakers, 21 educational sessions, a tour of PHFA's super energy-efficient office extension, and plenty of networking opportunities. PHFA has been leading the Housing Forum biennially for 25 years.

Housing professionals may register now for the May 11 and 12 conference to be held at the Hilton Harrisburg. Feedback from a survey of past forum attendees indicated that people wanted an in-person conference this year if appropriate COVID protocols would be in place. As a result, attendees must show proof of vaccinations or a recent negative COVID test to participate in the forum.

"This year's forum will give housing professionals the chance to meet in person and hear from top-notch experts in the affordable housing field," said PHFA Executive Director and CEO Robin Wiessmann. "We have two excellent keynote speakers planned, as well as a surprise guest speaker at the end of the event. For people working in affordable housing in Pennsylvania, it's a must-attend event."

The opening keynote speaker will be Dr. Ira Goldstein, president of Policy Solutions at Reinvestment Fund in Philadelphia. Dr. Goldstein will unveil findings from the PHFA-sponsored Barriers to Homeownership project. He'll report on his team's extensive research on more than 200 aspirational homebuyers in Pennsylvania, supplemented with in-depth interviews of 40 participants documenting differences in the homebuying experience for Pennsylvanians of varied racial backgrounds. PHFA will use the research to identify ways to improve the homebuying process so that it is more equitable.

The second keynote speaker will be Dr. Elliot Eisenberg, internationally known economist with GraphsandLaughs in Miami. Dr. Eisenberg has spoken at the forum in the past and always gets excellent reviews for his way of making economics relevant and even entertaining. He will review recent economic trends and provide a forecast for the housing economy in Pennsylvania and the country.

The 2022 PHFA Housing Forum offers others benefits for attendees, including:

- A wide variety of housing topics covered during 21 educational sessions;
- An awards ceremony recognizing some of the state's affordable housing innovators;
- An evening networking event for reconnecting with colleagues and meeting new business associates;
- A special "Meet and Greet" hour so attendees can get to know some of the PHFA staff with whom they interact but may never have met face-to-face;
- A vendor exhibit hall for learning about new housing-related products and services;
- A tour of recent additions to PHFA's main office in Harrisburg, which were constructed to Passive House and LEED Platinum standards; and
- A special closing speaker who will share essential traits for effective leaders.

Early bird pricing for the Housing Forum is only \$175 through April 8. After that date, registration increases to \$199. The price to attend the Forum on the opening day of the conference is \$250.

Detailed information about the 2022 Housing Forum and registration are available at the forum website <https://housingforum.phfa.org/>. People with questions not answered on the website can contact conference organizer Susan Shermer at sshermer@shermer-assoc.com.

About PHFA

The Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency works to provide affordable homeownership and rental housing options for older adults, low- and moderate-income families, and people with special housing needs. Through its carefully managed mortgage programs and investments in multifamily housing developments, PHFA also promotes economic development across the state. Since its creation by the legislature in 1972, it has generated more than \$15.9 billion of funding for more than 186,412 single-family home mortgage loans, helped fund the construction of 138,000 rental units, distributed approximately \$191 million to support local housing initiatives, and saved the homes of more than 50,520 families from foreclosure. PHFA programs and operations are funded primarily by the sale of securities and from fees paid by program users, not by public tax dollars. The agency is governed by a 14-member board.

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