

Dr. Michael C. Threatt Delivered Keynote at Housing Authority of Kansas City's 2024 Celebration of Excellence Awards

Dr. Michael C. Threatt met with Congress during PHADA's 2022 and 2023 Legislative Forums to illustrate the benefits of the Choice in Affordable Housing Act

SANFORD, NC, UNITED STATES, September 8, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Dr. Michael C. Threatt, a nationally recognized public housing executive, social scientist, and author, delivered a powerful and visionary keynote address titled "Housing Authority of the Future: Changing the Narrative of Affordable Housing with Purpose & Innovation" at the Housing Authority of Kansas City, Missouri's (HAKC) 2024 Celebration of Excellence Awards.

Held at the iconic National World War I Museum & Memorial, the event honored outstanding contributions to affordable housing and public service, while also celebrating the retirement of longtime Executive Director Mr. Edwin Lowndes—a transformative leader in Kansas City's housing landscape.

Dr. Threatt's keynote centered on the theme "Passion, Purpose, & Profession," urging housing professionals to reimagine the role of public housing authorities (PHAs) as catalysts for thriving communities and economic mobility.

"I am grateful to God for being selected as the Keynote Speaker for HAKC's 2024 Celebration of Excellence Awards, and thrilled to see the Choice in Affordable Housing Act included in the ROAD to Housing Act," said Dr. Threatt.



HAKC
Housing Authority
of Kansas City
Missouri
Providing a Foundation for the Future

2024
**CELEBRATION OF
EXCELLENCE AWARDS**

Friday
October 18, 2024
5:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

**National World War I
Museum & Memorial**
2 Memorial Dr.
Kansas City, MO 64108

KEYNOTE SPEAKER
Dr. Michael C. Threatt

**The book signing
will take place
during the
cocktail hour.**

Keynote Speaker for the HAKC's 2024 Celebration of Excellence Awards

A Call to Action: The Price of Bureaucracy

During the cocktail hour, Dr. Threatt hosted a signing for his first book, *The Price of Bureaucracy*, which explores systemic "red tape" challenges in PHA administration and offers a reform roadmap rooted in academic research and the lived experiences of Section 8 landlords.

"This book is my call to action," said Dr. Threatt. "It's for every housing professional and landlord who's ever felt constrained by the Section 8 Program's red tape—and every applicant and participant who felt like they won the lottery but couldn't find anywhere to cash in their housing choice voucher."

He emphasized that while the "choice" in the Housing Choice Voucher Program sounds promising on paper, real-world barriers often undermine its effectiveness. The book's final chapter, *Policy & Recommendations*, calls on Congress to pass meaningful Section 8 reforms that address both landlord and voucher holder pain points, like the Choice in Affordable Housing Act.

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Dr. Michael C. Threatt

From Research Dissertation to National Policy: MTW Landlord Incentives Cohort

Dr. Threatt's keynote drew heavily from his doctoral research, which examined behavioral and administrative barriers that discourage landlord participation in the Section 8 Program. His findings revealed that landlords often face delayed inspections, excessive paperwork, and a lack of trust in PHAs—factors that contribute to housing shortages for voucher holders.

He shared his support for all versions of the bipartisan Choice in Affordable Housing Act, and highlighted his implementation of the Moving to Work (MTW) Landlord Incentives Cohort at Dothan Housing, where he served as COO. His ARR model—Attracting, Recruiting, & Retaining—has since been adopted by PHAs nationwide and is now being introduced in Central Carolina through his leadership as CEO of the Sanford Housing Authority.



“We must continue to discuss the importance of [incentivizing greater landlord participation in the Section 8 Program](#),” Dr. Threatt said. “And that starts with relationships—not just financial incentives.”

He explained that PHAs often rely on outdated strategies, assuming landlords will engage simply because funding is available. Instead, he advocates for a customer service-driven approach, emphasizing the importance of communication and the role of a dedicated landlord liaison.

“We need the right messenger and the right message,” he said. “Landlords aren’t just looking for money—they’re looking for trust, responsiveness, and respect.” This right messenger is the landlord liaison position who understands this real estate relationship.

Dr. Threatt has consistently advocated for legislation that would [provide a bonus to PHAs that retain a dedicated landlord liaison on staff](#), a policy he championed during PHADA’s Legislative Forums in 2022 and 2023 during his meetings with members of Congress.

National Engagements and Legislative Advocacy

Dr. Threatt’s keynote was part of a week-long series of national engagements, including his attendance at HUD Headquarters in Washington, DC, for the 50th Anniversary Celebration of the Section 8 Program. There, he joined national leaders in reflecting on the program’s legacy and advocating for its future.

“This is a pivotal moment for the Section 8 Program,” he said. “We must lead with purpose and innovation to ensure PHAs become engines of opportunity.”

His dual perspective—as both practitioner and academic—uniquely positions him to bridge the gap between research and implementation, driving meaningful change in affordable housing across the nation.

NSPIRE Inspections for the Section 8 Program: Risk Losing More Landlords

Dr. Threatt also addressed the urgent need for PHAs to implement [flexibilities to streamline and otherwise optimize inspections](#) under the Housing Quality Standards (HQS) before transitioning to the National Standards for the Physical Inspection of Real Estate (NSPIRE) protocol. He warned



Dr. Michael C. Threatt Meeting with Congressman Emmanuel Cleaver at the PHADA Conference

that without proactive landlord engagement and training, PHAs risk losing more landlords during the rollout, especially with an October 1, 2025, implementation date.

“NSPIRE demands more accountability for unit interiors and has been a daunting task for PHAs to understand,” he said. “Therefore, if PHAs don’t consult landlords and value their input, we’ll see participation drop even further.”

He called for HUD to launch a new Landlord Taskforce to address these concerns, especially as PHAs brace for potential federal funding cuts.

A New Chapter: President-Elect of SERSHA

Dr. Threatt’s recent appointment as President-Elect of Southeastern Regional Section 8 Housing Association (SERSHA) marks a new chapter in his leadership journey. In this role, he will help shape regional strategies to improve Section 8 program delivery, foster innovation, and advocate for housing policy reform across the Southeast, like the ROAD to Housing Act.

“We must move beyond bureaucracy and simply checking boxes to meet HUD regulations,” he said. “The future of affordable housing depends on the Section 8 Program and our ability to lead with data and innovation.”

Closing Thoughts

Dr. Threatt’s keynote at HAKC’s Celebration of Excellence Awards was more than a speech—it was a rallying cry for transformation. His message resonated deeply with housing professionals, policymakers, and community leaders alike: the time to reframe affordable housing is now.

As PHAs across the country navigate complex challenges, Dr. Threatt continues to lead with vision, research, and a commitment to purpose-driven innovation. His work is shaping the future of affordable housing and inspiring a new generation of Housers.

Dr. Michael C. Threatt
Elevate Housing Solutions, LLC
+1 205-552-9491
mthreatt@elevatehousing.com
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