



# MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

**ASHON NESBITT**

As we enter this season of gratitude and look back over 2023, we have so much to be thankful for in the housing ecosystem. We experienced the beginning of a historic investment in housing through the Live Local Act. The Act's record \$811 million in funding includes the up to \$100 million tax credit program, redirection of \$150 million annually in revenue to the SAIL program, \$100 million for the now permanent Hometown Heroes purchase assistance program, and a host of tools for land use and property tax exemptions.

Communities throughout the state now have significantly more resources to expedite the production and preservation of housing affordable to the state's low- to moderate-income workforce, and vulnerable populations such as older adults. We are already seeing results from this historic legislation as local governments work to deploy, in some cases, nearly double their allocation of SHIP from 2021 and new developments are being proposed and approved utilizing the Act's land use tool.

Federal resources also abound at several agencies, from the Department of Housing and Urban Development to the Department of Energy, in response to the national reach of unaffordability. Housing is at the forefront of public policy at all levels of government. Rising housing costs have resulted in widespread instability, even in households with higher incomes, forcing policymakers and communities of all sizes and types to make housing a priority. With so much attention and resources, it is imperative that we galvanize the energy of this moment to create long-term impacts that will truly move the needle in a positive direction.

The Florida Housing Coalition understands our role in the housing ecosystem to lead the transfer and flow of information, learning, and resources to empower professionals, practitioners, and policymakers to create change and drive results on the ground in their communities. We are so grateful for our partnership with Florida Housing Finance Corporation for the Catalyst program, supported annually by the Florida Legislature, which serves as a key resource in bringing information and learning opportunities that ultimately influences the effective use of resources to address local housing needs.

We are grateful to our members and partners for driving record-breaking attendance at our 2023 Annual Conference. The energy was palpable with many of you staying past the end to continue gaining knowledge and making connections with people across the state and nation. Unfortunately, our Conference was cut short by Hurricane Idalia. Our ability to quickly respond to natural disasters as a state was even seen at the Conference, and of course we are grateful for the resources for recovery coming down from the state and federal governments.

As 2023 draws to a close, we can look ahead to 2024 with hope and excitement for housing. We recognize our members, partners, and all stakeholders as catalysts for change. We look forward to engaging and collaborating more in this coming year as we all work together to accelerate the production and preservation of housing affordable to all Floridians, especially our low- to moderate-income workforce, older adults, and our most vulnerable residents.