

Cosponsor The Common Sense Housing Investment Act (H.R. 1662)

From: The Honorable Keith Ellison

Sent By: Carol.Wayman@mail.house.gov

Bill: H.R. 1662

Date: 2/26/2016

Cosponsor The Common Sense Housing Investment Act (H.R. 1662)

End Homelessness for Children and Families: Address the Affordable Rental Housing Crisis

Current cosponsors: Reps. Conyers, Edwards, Lee, Rush, Scott and Wilson

Supported by [nearly 2,300 organizations](#) including Council of Large Public Housing Associations, Corporate Social Responsibility Association, National Council of La Raza, AFL-CIO Housing Investment Trust, Children's Defense Fund, Corporation for Supportive Housing, Jesuit Conference USA, Jewish Community Action, Manufactured Home Owners Association of America, Mercy Housing, National AIDS Housing Coalition, National Alliance to End Homelessness, National Association of Real Estate Brokers - Investment Division, Housing Counseling Agency (NID-HCA), National Council on Independent Living, National Church Residences, National Disability Rights Network, National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty, National Leased Housing Association, National Low Income Housing Coalition, Network: A National Catholic Social Justice Lobby, Sisters of Mercy of the Americas, Institute Leadership Team, Stewards of Affordable Housing for the Future, United Methodist Church-Global Board of Church and Society, Volunteers of America and Xaverian Brothers.

Dear Colleague,

I write to draw your attention to President Barack Obama's [bold plan to end family homelessness](#) in America and urge you to ensure its success by supporting my bill to provide tens of thousands of affordable homes to struggling families.

We need a robust strategy to address the affordable housing crisis in this country. On a given night, [560,000 people are homeless](#); almost half are families. In any given year, there are more than 1.3 million homeless children, up from 679,724 before the [Financial Crisis](#). Homelessness is due to appalling levels of affordable rents: One in two households [pay more than 30 percent](#) of their gross income on rent and one in four households pay more than 50 percent of their gross income on rent. [Nowhere in the United States](#) can someone work 40 hours a week at minimum wage and afford a one bedroom apartment at a fair market rent.

While the Administration has made progress at [ending homelessness for veterans](#), family homelessness remains a problem. Currently, only one in four families that qualify for rental housing assistance actually receives any benefit. This inadequate response is why I am heartened that the Department of Housing and Urban Development's 2017 budget includes \$38 billion in rental housing assistance to support 4.5 million low-income families. Homelessness directly impacts all other aspects of life. The health of an individual declines from a lack of necessities causing health and personal ailments ranging from drug dependency, nutritional deficiencies to violence or increased chance of entering the criminal justice system. [Seventy-five percent of students who are homeless as teens](#) drop out of school.

You can help by co-sponsoring [The Common Sense Housing Investment Act of 2015](#), (H.R. 1662). It provides \$200 billion over ten years for affordable rental housing for extremely low-income people. It provides funds to proven programs by replacing the [mortgage interest deduction](#) with a 15% tax credit and lowering the maximum deductible interest allowed from \$1.1 million to \$500,000. This change would enable 16 million more current mortgage holders to receive a tax benefit for homeownership and also provide desperately-needed resources to solve the national rental shortage.

Providing a housing benefit to more people would help our families, our communities and our economy. For more information or to cosponsor H.R. 1662, please contact Carol Wayman at Carol.Wayman@mail.house.gov or 5.4755.

Sincerely,

/s/

Keith Ellison
Member of Congress