

Washington Post Calls for Curbs on Mortgage Interest Deduction to Fund Affordable Rental Housing

From: The Honorable Keith Ellison

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

Bill: H.R. 1662

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Washington Post Editorial Calls for Improved Targeting of Federal Housing Benefits

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

Dear Colleague,

I write to draw your attention to the below [editorial in yesterday's *Washington Post*](#) which calls for converting the regressive mortgage interest deduction to a flat rate tax credit and using the savings to invest in affordable rental housing for extremely low-income people.

As the *Post* noted, our nation provides [way more generous benefits](#) to the [wealthiest homeowners](#) while providing inadequate rental housing assistance to low-income families. In fact, the average family earning more than \$200,000 a year receives four times the federal housing benefits received by the average family who earns under \$20,000 annually.

Meanwhile, our [rental housing crisis](#) continues to worsen. Nearly half of all renters pay more than 30% of their income for housing and nearly all extremely low-income households pay more than half. The affordable rental housing shortage primarily affects people under 25, the elderly, people with disabilities and low-income families.

As Congress considers tax reform, we should consider my bill, The Common Sense Housing Investment Act, (H.R. 1662). [Supported by more than 2,200](#) local governments and organizations, the bill converts the mortgage interest deduction to a 15 percent flat-rate tax credit on interest paid on mortgages up to \$500,000. A 15 percent tax credit would actually allow 16 million more homeowners to receive a tax benefit.

I would use the savings to address the national rental housing shortage. My bill would provide for \$200 billion over ten years to expand the Low Income Housing Tax Credit, Section 8 rental assistance and the public housing capital fund. It would also provide permanent funding to build more affordable rental housing through the National Affordable Housing Trust Fund.

Providing a housing benefit to more people would actually 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