

Dear Governor [Insert State],

On behalf of the vulnerable people who are still struggling after Hurricane [Name], we urge you to formally request robust federal housing resources and programs, including the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Disaster Housing Assistance Program (DHAP), as well as a special allocation of the Low Income Housing Tax Credit, national Housing Trust Fund, and HOME Investment Partnerships Program, as soon as possible.

History has shown us that DHAP is an effective and proven solution for individuals and families with the greatest needs – including low income seniors, people with disabilities, families with children, veterans, people experiencing homelessness, and other at-risk populations – after devastating disasters. By providing temporary rental assistance and wrap-around case management, DHAP helps the lowest income families find permanent housing solutions, secure employment, and connect to public benefits as they rebuild their lives and get back on their feet.

Today, we need DHAP more than ever. After Hurricane [Name], for example, extremely low income families are facing significant barriers to accessing FEMA's transitional shelter assistance. FEMA's transitional shelter program must be renewed every 14 days, creating great instability for those relying on it. Because it expires permanently six months after the initial disaster declaration, transitional shelter will create severe housing instability for many households. Moreover, hotels participating in FEMA's transitional shelter program often charge daily "resort" fees, require security deposits, and require that displaced households have credit cards – all of which are barriers for low income households that have already depleted any savings that they may have had and that are often unbanked or underbanked.

Without DHAP, displaced, low income families often have little choice but to move into uninhabitable or overcrowded homes, stay at shelters, or sleep in their cars or on the streets. According to [state-based news source], there are numerous accounts of individuals that were unable to access FEMA's transitional housing assistance that later needed emergency hospital care after returning to mold-infested homes. Families with transitional housing vouchers have also been turned away from hotels and are living in unsanitary "tent cities" because they had no place to go.

Before HUD can stand up its DHAP program, however, FEMA must enter into an interagency agreement with HUD. While FEMA has the authority to do this without any further state action, the agency has been reticent to do so without a request from your office. **We urge you to request that FEMA enter into an interagency agreement with HUD immediately to allow HUD to stand up its DHAP program to serve eligible hurricane survivors in the state.**

In [insert state], we suffer from a severe shortage of affordable rental homes. Even before the storm, there were only [insert state's shortage number] affordable and available homes for 100 families with extremely low incomes in [state]. Cities like [city] and [city] have even fewer affordable and available homes, with less than [insert city's shortage number] homes for every 100 extremely low income households. The damage caused by Hurricane [Name] means that there is even less supply and more demand.

For that reason, **we urge you to request other targeted federal housing and community development resources that can be used to rebuild our communities and ensure that the current affordable rental housing crisis across the state is not made worse.** This includes a special allocation of four specific

housing programs: the National Housing Trust Fund, a new federal resource designed specifically to address the shortage of affordable rental housing for people with the greatest needs; Low Income Housing Tax Credits, along with broadly supported modifications to increase efficiency and expand the program's reach to the lowest income households; HOME Investment Partnerships program funding; and New Markets Tax Credits.

DHAP and these targeted resources are necessary to ensure that the housing recovery is complete, equitable, and speedy.

Sincerely,

CC: State Congressional Delegation