

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

February 14, 2017

The Honorable Kevin Brady
Chairman
Committee on Ways and Means
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Richard E. Neal
Ranking Member
Committee on Ways and Means
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Brady and Ranking Member Neal:

Our nation is in the midst of an affordable housing crisis. Growing demand has resulted in higher rents. More families than ever before struggle to pay their rent each month. Every Congressional district and state across the nation is impacted. Yet, despite the need, federal investments that reduce homelessness and housing poverty are sorely underfunded. As a result, just one in four low-income families eligible for federal housing assistance receive the help they need.

Comprehensive tax reform provides one of the best opportunities to end homelessness and housing poverty once and for all. As your Committee drafts comprehensive tax reform legislation, we urge you to seize this opportunity by redirecting any savings derived from changes to tax benefits for housing be dedicated to providing affordable rental housing to low-income families. This would include tax benefits that benefit some homeowners, such as the mortgage interest deduction, property tax deduction, capital gains exclusion, etc. —whether through direct changes or by increasing the standard tax deduction. Revenue derived from these sources should be dedicated to expanding highly effective affordable rental housing programs that serve families with the greatest needs, like the national Housing Trust Fund, the Low Income Housing Tax Credit with changes to ensure deeper income targeting and other rental assistance and housing production programs.

In doing so, we can make the critical investments that our nation needs to help America's families, our local communities and our national economy thrive. We know the key to reducing poverty and increasing economic mobility is access to safe and affordable homes. Increasing access to affordable homes bolsters child and family success, economic growth, wages, and productivity. And, each dollar invested in developing and preserving affordable homes boosts local economies by leveraging public and private resources to generate income—including resident earnings and additional local tax revenue—and supports job creation and retention.

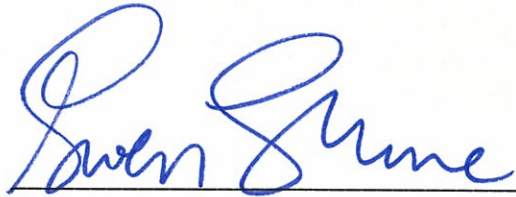
At a time when America's housing affordability crisis continues to reach new heights, our nation should be investing resources into programs that serve those with the most acute housing needs.

For this reason, we urge you to redirect any savings derived from reforming the mortgage interest deduction or other homeownership benefits —whether through direct changes or by increasing the standard tax deduction — into rental housing programs that serve low-income families and individuals.

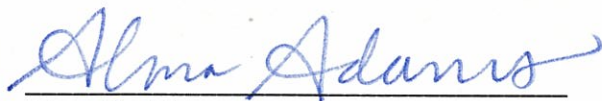
Sincerely,



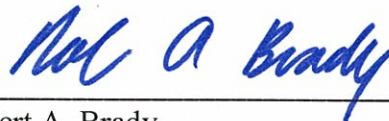
Keith Ellison
Member of Congress



Gwen Moore
Member of Congress



Alma S. Adams
Member of Congress



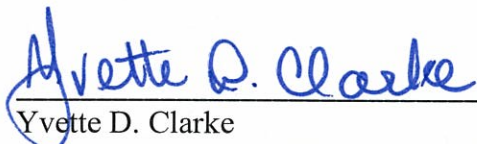
Robert A. Brady
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André Carson
Member of Congress



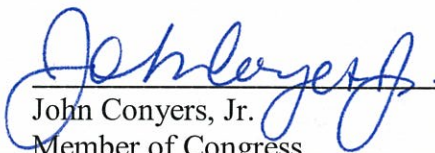
David N. Cicilline
Member of Congress



Yvette D. Clarke
Member of Congress



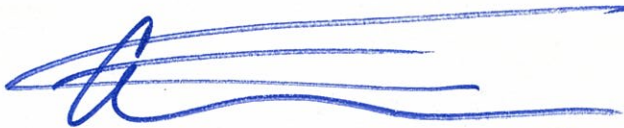
Bonnie Watson Coleman
Member of Congress



John Conyers, Jr.
Member of Congress



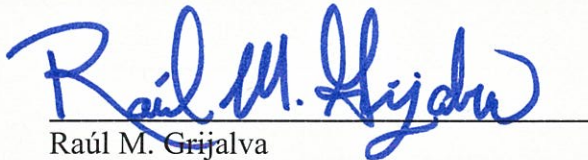
Mark DeSaulnier
Member of Congress



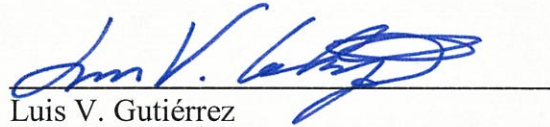
Adriano Espaillat
Member of Congress



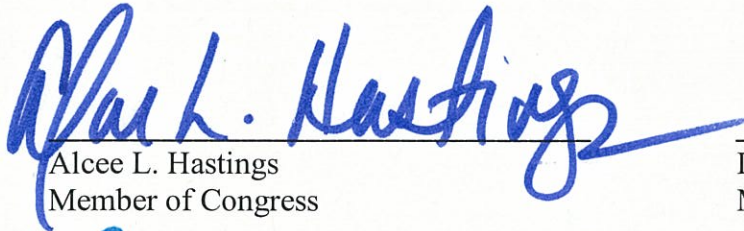
Al Green
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Raúl M. Grijalva
Member of Congress



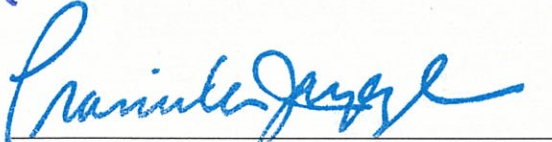
Luis V. Gutiérrez
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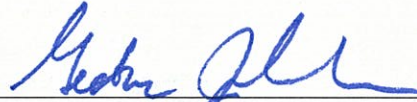
Alcee L. Hastings
Member of Congress



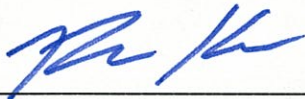
Denny Heck
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Pramila Jayapal
Member of Congress



Hakeem S. Jeffries
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Ruben J. Kihuen
Member of Congress



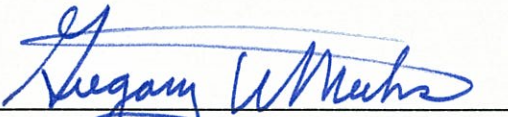
Rick Larsen
Member of Congress



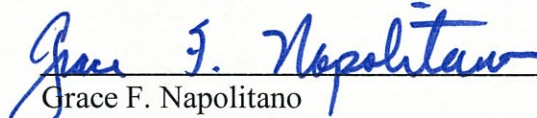
Brenda L. Lawrence
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Barbara Lee
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Gregory W. Meeks
Member of Congress



Grace F. Napolitano
Member of Congress



Richard M. Nolan
Member of Congress



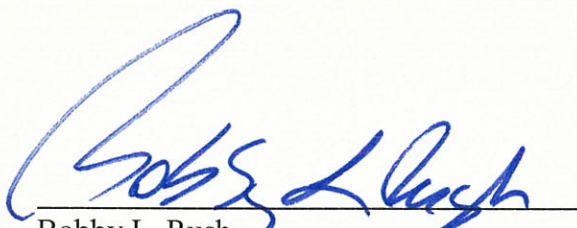
Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress



Chellie Pingree
Member of Congress



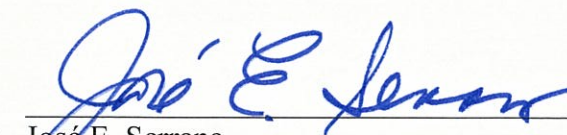
Mark Pocan
Member of Congress



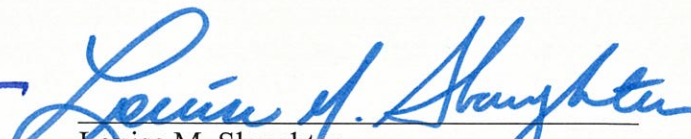
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Tim Ryan
Member of Congress




José E. Serrano
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Louise M. Slaughter
Member of Congress



Darren Soto
Member of Congress



Nydia M. Velázquez
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