

To: CNN, Des Moines Register, and moderators of the next presidential candidate debate:

We urge you to ask each presidential candidate how they would address the nation's housing and homelessness crisis.

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Our country is in the grips of a severe and pervasive housing affordability crisis. Nationally, there is a shortage of 7 million homes affordable and available to the lowest-income renters. Rents have risen faster than renters' incomes over the last two decades, and while more people are renting than ever, the supply of housing has lagged. Fewer than four affordable and available rental homes exist for every 10 of the lowest-income renter households nationwide. As a result, recordbreaking numbers of people cannot afford decent homes. Every state and community – urban, rural, or suburban – is impacted.

So far, 15 presidential candidates have released major housing plans or other housing proposals to address the housing crisis. They are talking about these plans on the campaign trail - in town halls, forums, and meetings in New Hampshire, Iowa, and beyond. People in America need to hear all presidential candidates share what they will do to make homes affordable to the tens of millions who are struggling to keep roofs over their heads or who have no homes at all.

This is an issue of paramount importance to voters. According to a recent national public opinion poll, 60% of people say housing affordability is a serious problem where they live, up 21 points from 2016. Over 61% of people report having to make at least one sacrifice in the past three years because they were struggling with housing costs, such as cutting back on learning activities for their child, nutritious food, or healthcare.

Strong majorities of the public expect solutions – 83% say elected officials are not paying enough attention to the cost of housing and the need for more affordable housing. Nearly 8 in 10 people in America say the president should "take major action" to make housing more affordable for low-income families. And 91% of Democratic voters say they are more likely to vote for candidates who have detailed place for making housing more affordable. plans for making housing more affordable.

When people have stable, accessible, affordable homes, lives dramatically improve, economic productivity is stronger, and our nation is more just and equitable. Voters want our leaders to address affordable housing, and they need to know where the candidates stand.

As you prepare for the January Democratic debate, we urge you to ask each candidate the question on the minds of voters: How will you address the nation's affordable housing crisis?

To see a complete list of the signatories, visit: ourhomes-ourvotes.org/sign-on-letter

