



Campaign for Housing and Community Development Funding
Working to ensure maximum federal resources for housing and community development

March X, 2022

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Chair, U.S. Senate Committee on
Appropriations
437 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Chair, U.S. House Committee on
Appropriations
2413 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Ranking Member, U.S. Senate Committee on
Appropriations
304 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Kay Granger
Ranking Member, U.S. House Committee on
Appropriations
1026 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

To Chair Leahy, Vice Chair Shelby, Chair DeLauro, and Ranking Member Granger:

We, the **X** undersigned organizations, write to urge Congress to **enact final Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 spending bills that provide the highest level of funding possible for vital federal programs that provide housing assistance and community development resources to aid low-income households**. We represent national, state, and local businesses, housing and community development, faith-based, disability, and civil rights organizations, as well as officials in municipal, tribal and state governments. We believe, as does the Biden-Harris Administration, that housing is a basic human right that every American should be able to enjoy as part of a dignified standard of living.

With the staggering increases in rents and other market rates, appropriations for affordable housing and community development programs must substantially increase to maintain current levels of assistance. Flat funding – including funds extended through a long-term Continuing Resolution (CR) – acts as a cut, reducing the number of low-income households served and preventing private owners and public housing agencies from making vital repairs. Multiple or lengthy CRs greatly delay funding for existing programs and create even longer waits for housing assistance and community investments. With the country in the midst of an ongoing pandemic that has left millions of households struggling to make ends meet, the importance of passing comprehensive spending bills and avoiding a long-term CR cannot be overstated.

Even before the pandemic, the country was in the midst of a pervasive affordable housing crisis. One in four renters spent more than half of their income on rent, and homelessness rates were rising in communities across the country. A growing number of people have been unable to afford a place to call home, and the number of homes accessible to people with disabilities remains at low levels despite increasing need. Our nation's housing crisis impacts people of color in particular because of generations of discrimination and disinvestment. Housing costs are rising faster than wages, our nation's affordable housing crisis worsening, and the supply of affordable and accessible housing and rental assistance has not kept pace.

Now, coronavirus has accentuated the inextricable link between housing and health and brought

to light longstanding disparities in access to critical resources like affordable, accessible housing that have contributed to the virus's disproportionate impact on communities of color, people with disabilities, women, older adults, and low-income people. The pandemic has underscored the health and economic costs of an underfunded housing system.

With more families struggling to make ends meet due to the pandemic and our nation's affordable housing crisis worsening, federal investments are critical to create more fair and equitable communities and ensure families thrive. Federal housing and community development programs create millions of jobs and offer critical resources to disenfranchised individuals and communities.

Accessible, affordable housing has broad, positive impacts on individuals, families, communities, and the economy. Increasing and preserving access to affordable housing—especially in areas of opportunity—helps families climb the economic ladder, leads to greater community development, and bolsters economic productivity.

Additionally, community development assistance is vital for rural, urban, and suburban areas to revitalize distressed neighborhoods, address urgent community needs, and provide critical public services and economic development. Investing in affordable housing infrastructure reduces existing inequities and boosts local economies by leveraging public and private resources to lift resident earnings and local tax revenue. In fact, building 100 affordable rental homes generates \$11.7 million in local income, \$2.2 million in taxes and other revenue for local governments, and 161 local jobs in the first year.

State and local governments and the communities they serve rely on the resources provided by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to meet the infrastructure needs of their communities. These infrastructure needs exist in every community across the country. Providing additional federal resources through proven, effective HUD and USDA housing programs will allow neighborhoods to thrive and meet the needs of more of their lowest-income residents.

We urge you to enact final spending bills that ensure the highest amount of funding possible for affordable housing and community development programs in FY 2023.

Sincerely,