

March 25, 2019

The Honorable David Price
Chairman
Subcommittee on Transportation and
Housing and Urban Development
Appropriations Committee

The Honorable Mario Diaz-Balart
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Transportation and
Housing and Urban Development
Appropriations Committee

As you consider the Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 Transportation and Housing and Urban Development Appropriations bill, we respectfully request \$100 million in appropriations for the Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Youth Homelessness Demonstration Project (YHDP), which will reduce the number of youth experiencing homelessness and augment community resources.

On a single night in January 2018, the United States government counted 36,361 unaccompanied homeless youth under the age of 25. However, this number is generally underestimated and fails to provide a complete picture of youth homelessness.¹ Annually, one in 30 youth ages 13 to 17 and one in 10 young adults ages 18 to 25 endure some form of homelessness. Presently, about 65% of youth and young adults who want services are on waiting lists, with an average wait time of 4.5 months.

Congress can effectively address and ultimately end youth homelessness. Once seen as an intractable societal problem, demonstrations have shown that when Congress invests in efficient and effective homeless assistance, dramatic progress is possible. For example, due to targeted investments homelessness among veterans has been reduced by 46%, including a 50% decrease in the number of veterans living unsheltered in the last decade.²

Youth homelessness touches every congressional district—rural, suburban, and urban. As a result, Congress funded the ground-breaking Youth Homelessness Demonstration Project in FY16. Communities across the country have pooled together ideas and resources to secure grants from YHDP and test creative solutions. A \$20 million increase from FY19 enacted levels will allow more communities the opportunity to implement innovative technical assistance models

¹ add

² add

with a focus on collecting and evaluating best practices from different communities nationwide, while allowing us to keep the momentum towards preventing and ending homelessness for every young person.

We believe that every young person in America should have the opportunity to live up to their potential, which necessitates having a safe and stable place to call home. This requires communities to come together to innovate, collaborate, and offer young people a variety of housing interventions—affordable housing, rapid re-housing, supportive housing, transitional housing, and emergency services—that are scaled up to meet the community’s assessed need.

The Youth Homelessness Demonstration Project reduces the number of youth experiencing homelessness and paves the way for communities to use resources more efficiently. The demonstration serves as a blueprint for communities, service providers, advocates, and policymakers alike. We urge you to increase funding for the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development’s Youth Homelessness Demonstration Project (YHDP) to \$100 million in FY20 THUD appropriations bill. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

SCOTT H. PETERS
Member of Congress