

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

October 18, 2021

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Majority Leader Schumer:

We write to highlight the urgent need for substantial affordable housing infrastructure investments as part of the broader Build Back Better Act. While congressional leaders continue to negotiate the size and scope of the economic recovery package, it is critical that any cuts made to the overall package do not come at the expense of affordable, accessible homes for America's lowest-income and most marginalized people.

Even before the pandemic, America was in the grips of an affordable housing crisis, most severely impacting the most marginalized and lowest-income people, including seniors, people with disabilities, families with children, and others. Nationally, there is a shortage of 7 million homes affordable and available to renters with extremely low incomes. For every 10 of these households, there are fewer than 4 affordable and available homes. There is not a single state or congressional district with enough affordable homes to meet this demand.

Without affordable options, 8 million extremely low-income households pay at least half of their limited incomes on rent, leaving them without the resources they need to put food on the table, purchase needed medications, or make ends meet. Another half a million people experience homelessness on any given night. Despite the clear need, 3 in 4 households eligible for housing assistance receive none because Congress continues to underfund proven solutions. Families wait for years, even decades, on waiting lists.

The housing and homelessness crisis disproportionately harms Black, Indigenous, and People of Color, who – because of structural racism in housing and other sectors – are more likely to have extremely low-incomes, be severely cost-burdened, face eviction, and experience homelessness.

As this legislation advances in Congress, we urge you to ensure that funding levels for rental assistance, public housing and the Housing Trust Fund match the amounts included in the bill approved by the House Financial Services Committee on September 14:

- \$90 billion to expand rental assistance to 1 million additional households.
- \$80 billion to address the Public Housing repair backlog for 2.5 million residents.
- \$37 billion for the National Housing Trust Fund to build and preserve 330,000 homes affordable to people with the greatest needs.

Taken together, **these investments could effectively end homelessness in the United States.** Any cuts to funding for these priority programs means fewer people safely and affordably housed.

More than ever, we need your leadership to enact bold policies to ensure that people with the lowest incomes and the most marginalized people have a stable, affordable home. These housing investments should be prioritized to help ensure the Build Back Better Act delivers broad and equitable benefits to all Americans.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ritchie Torres". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Ritchie Torres
Member of Congress

Emanuel Cleaver, II
Member of Congress

Hakeem Jeffries
Member of Congress

Carolyn B. Maloney
Member of Congress

Pramila Jayapal
Member of Congress

Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress

Raul M. Grijalva
Member of Congress

Dwight Evans
Member of Congress

Jesús G. "Chuy" García
Member of Congress

Yvette D. Clarke
Member of Congress

Nydia M. Velázquez
Member of Congress

Marilyn Strickland
Member of Congress

Rashida Tlaib
Member of Congress

Adam B. Schiff
Member of Congress

Ro Khanna
Member of Congress

James P. McGovern
Member of Congress

Earl Blumenauer
Member of Congress

Nikema Williams
Member of Congress

Zoe Lofgren
Member of Congress

Barbara Lee
Member of Congress

Grace Meng
Member of Congress

Madeleine Dean
Member of Congress

Jake Auchincloss
Member of Congress

Karen Bass
Member of Congress

Mondaire Jones
Member of Congress

Danny K. Davis
Member of Congress

Jan Schakowsky
Member of Congress

Marc Veasey
Member of Congress

Brenda L. Lawrence
Member of Congress

Grace F. Napolitano
Member of Congress

Dina Titus
Member of Congress

Gregory W. Meeks
Member of Congress

Lori Trahan
Member of Congress

Mike Quigley
Member of Congress

Steven Horsford
Member of Congress

Mary Gay Scanlon
Member of Congress

Peter Welch
Member of Congress

Tim Ryan
Member of Congress

Andy Levin
Member of Congress

Gwen Moore
Member of Congress

Diana DeGette
Member of Congress

Marie Newman
Member of Congress

Judy Chu
Member of Congress

Mark DeSaulnier
Member of Congress

Ann McLane Kuster
Member of Congress

Bobby L. Rush
Member of Congress

Cori Bush
Member of Congress

Frederica S. Wilson
Member of Congress

Gerald E. Connolly
Member of Congress

Colin Allred
Member of Congress

Chellie Pingree
Member of Congress

Veronica Escobar
Member of Congress

Henry C. "Hank" Johnson Jr.
Member of Congress

Ilhan Omar
Member of Congress

Jamaal Bowman
Member of Congress

Linda T. Sánchez
Member of Congress

Paul D. Tonko
Member of Congress

Bonnie Watson Coleman
Member of Congress

Robin L. Kelly
Member of Congress

Alan Lowenthal
Member of Congress

Suzanne Bonamici
Member of Congress

C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger
Member of Congress

Ruben Gallego
Member of Congress

Adam Smith
Member of Congress

Jim Cooper
Member of Congress

Mike Levin
Member of Congress

Deborah K. Ross
Member of Congress

Val B. Demings
Member of Congress

Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez
Member of Congress

Michael F.Q. San Nicolas
Member of Congress

Jerry McNerney
Member of Congress

Stephen F Lynch
Member of Congress

Jamie Raskin
Member of Congress

David N. Cicilline
Member of Congress

Lloyd Doggett
Member of Congress

Albio Sires
Member of Congress

Jerrold Nadler
Member of Congress

Ted Lieu
Member of Congress

Raja Krishnamoorthi
Member of Congress

Tony Cárdenas
Member of Congress

Sanford D. Bishop, Jr.
Member of Congress

Joseph D. Morelle
Member of Congress

Alma S. Adams, Ph.D.
Member of Congress

Kathy Manning
Member of Congress

Mike Doyle
Member of Congress

Ann Kirkpatrick
Member of Congress

Jackie Speier
Member of Congress

Debbie Dingell
Member of Congress

Antonio Delgado
Member of Congress

Jim Langevin
Member of Congress

André Carson
Member of Congress

Lucille Roybal-Allard
Member of Congress

Lisa Blunt Rochester
Member of Congress

Brendan F. Boyle
Member of Congress

Stacey E. Plaskett
Member of Congress

Mark Takano
Member of Congress

Jimmy Panetta
Member of Congress

Donald M. Payne, Jr.
Member of Congress

Nanette Diaz Barragán
Member of Congress

Thomas R. Suozzi
Member of Congress

Jahana Hayes
Member of Congress

Al Green
Member of Congress

Adriano Espaillat
Member of Congress

Melanie Stansbury
Member of Congress

Ayanna Pressley
Member of Congress

Donald S. Beyer Jr.
Member of Congress

Rick Larsen
Member of Congress

Steve Cohen
Member of Congress

Bill Pascrell, Jr.
Member of Congress

A. Donald McEachin
Member of Congress

Kaiali'i Kahele
Member of Congress

G. K. Butterfield
Member of Congress

Sylvia R. Garcia
Member of Congress

Daniel T. Kildee
Member of Congress

Troy Carter, Sr.
Member of Congress

Julia Brownley
Member of Congress

Anna G. Eshoo
Member of Congress

Josh Harder
Member of Congress

Doris Matsui
Member of Congress

Derek Kilmer
Member of Congress

Angie Craig
Member of Congress

John P. Sarbanes
Member of Congress

Salud Carbajal
Member of Congress

Haley Stevens
Member of Congress

Teresa Leger Fernández
Member of Congress