



# NHTF • The National Housing Trust Fund

September 30, 2015

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Majority Leader  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20150

The Honorable Harry Reid  
Minority Leader  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable John Boehner  
Speaker of the House  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Minority Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Majority Leader McConnell, Minority Leader Reid, Speaker Boehner, and Minority Leader Pelosi,

On behalf of the more than 7,000 organizations from every congressional district that support the National Housing Trust Fund (NHTF) and the millions of poor and homeless Americans who will someday be safely housed because of the NHTF, I urge you to protect the funding for the NHTF as you negotiate final federal spending for FY16.

Specifically, we ask that you reject the House's proposal to direct all of the NHTF resources to the HOME program in FY16 and to prohibit any funds from any source from going to the NHTF in the future. This proposal, in H.R. 2577, the House Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies FY16 appropriations bill, must be rejected. The proposal would raid funds from the only new federal program in more than 40 years designed to increase the supply of rental housing affordable to the poorest Americans.

As you know, in communities across America, millions are without access to affordable and decent housing. Extremely low income (ELI) families, with incomes below 30% of area median, face a national shortage of 7.1 million affordable rental units; for every 100 extremely low income renters, there are only 31 affordable and available rental homes. Because of this shortage, 75% of ELI renters must pay more than half of their meager incomes for their homes, forcing them to forgo health care, groceries, and savings for education and retirement—just so they can pay rent to keep a roof over their heads. In every state, the District of Columbia, and major metropolitan areas, we need to build and preserve rental housing that the lowest income families can afford.

The primary purpose of the NHTF is to expand the supply of rental housing that is affordable for extremely low income households. No other federal housing program that expands the supply of rental housing is targeted to this income group, and the existing HUD programs that do serve this income group are shrinking due to continued cuts in funding for discretionary programs. The NHTF is the only viable option currently in law to begin to address the appalling shortage of affordable rental housing in the United States. The NHTF is poised to provide every state and the District of Columbia with its much needed resources for the first time in 2016.

We are mindful of the fact that the appropriations committees are under severe constraints due to the unworkable sequester spending caps required under the Budget Control Act (BCA). We urge Congress to reverse the sequestration caps put in place by the BCA and enact legislation similar to the Murray-Ryan Bipartisan Budget Act that provided sequester relief for FY14 and FY15. If such legislation is passed, we look forward to working with you to ensure HUD programs have the funds they need to continue to serve some of the poorest and most vulnerable families in the nation.

Sincerely,



Sheila Crowley, Ph.D., MSW  
President and CEO  
National Low Income Housing Coalition

cc:

Hon. Thad Cochran  
Hon. Barbara Mikulski  
Hon. Hal Rogers  
Hon. Nita Lowey  
Hon. Susan Collins  
Hon. Jack Reed  
Hon. Mario Diaz-Balart  
Hon. David Price