

February 7, 2018

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

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

To Majority Leader McConnell, Minority Leader Schumer, Speaker Ryan, and Minority Leader Pelosi:

We, the undersigned 343 organizations, write to urge you to enact as quickly as possible a robust disaster relief bill that includes basic safeguards and housing resources to help low income seniors, people with disabilities, families with children, veterans, people experiencing homelessness and other vulnerable populations get back on their feet. Specifically, we urge you to amend the House-approved disaster relief bill to stand up the Disaster Housing Assistance Program (DHAP), a proven solution to the longer term housing needs of low income disaster survivors, to collect and make public data to ensure that the recovery reaches all households, and to provide housing resources to ensure that the severe shortage of affordable rental homes in disaster-impacted communities is not worsened. Further delay in providing these critical resources and safeguards will only make it more difficult for low income survivors to fully recover.

One of the top priorities after a disaster is ensuring that all displaced families, including those with the lowest incomes, have a safe, accessible, and affordable place to live. By providing temporary rental assistance and wrap-around case management, DHAP helps low income families find permanent housing solutions, secure employment, and connect to public benefits as they rebuild their lives. DHAP has been used successfully after Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, Gustav, and Ike and Superstorm Sandy. Despite the clear need, FEMA has not taken the steps necessary to stand up the DHAP program. To this end, we urge Congress to direct FEMA to work with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to stand up the DHAP program to serve eligible disaster survivors. Without DHAP, tens of thousands of families are still living in hotels through FEMA's Transitional Shelter Assistance program and low income families that have been shut out of the hotel program have had no choice but to move into uninhabitable or overcrowded homes, stay at shelters, or sleep in cars or on the streets. It has been five months since the first hurricane made landfall. In the past, these steps were taken as quickly as two weeks after a disaster.

We believe that the House-approved disaster bill should be amended to direct FEMA to collect and make public disaster recovery data at the most granular level possible to ensure that federal resources are being spent fairly and equitably to meet the needs of low income people and communities. Access to data on unmet needs and how resources are spent is necessary to inform effective public participation in the development of state action plans and to ensure that the use of public funds is balanced among homeowners, renters, and people experiencing homelessness, as well as among housing, infrastructure, and mitigation projects targeted to the most affected areas and the lowest-income households. Making FEMA data public can also help identify gaps in services as well as inform a more efficient response in future disaster recoveries.

Any disaster relief bill should also include specifically designated housing investments, including the National Housing Trust Fund, Low Income Housing Tax Credits, the HOME program, and New Markets Tax Credits - targeted to low income households - to address the existing severe shortage of affordable rental homes in these communities. Even before last year's hurricanes and wildfires, there were fewer than 18 affordable and available rental homes for every 100 extremely low-income households in Orlando and Houston. California had one of the largest shortages of affordable housing in the nation. In Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, poverty gripped 45% and 30% of the population, respectively – far more than the 15% national average. Without housing-specific resources, the severe shortage of affordable rental homes will likely worsen.

We urge you to enact as quickly as possible a robust disaster relief bill that ensures that all disaster survivors, including those with the lowest incomes, have a safe, accessible, and affordable place to live as they recover.

Sincerely,

National Organizations (92)

African American Health Alliance
American Atheists
American Baptist Home Mission Societies
Americans for Financial Reform
Autistic Self Advocacy Network
B'nai B'rith International
Boston Capital
CarsonWatch
Catholic Charities USA
Center for Community Change
Center for Popular Democracy
Center for Public Representation
Children's Leadership Council
Coalition on Human Needs
CohnReznick
Corporation for Supportive Housing
Elevate Energy
Enterprise Community Partners
Equal Rights Center
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Advocacy Office
Fahe
Grounded Solutions Network
Habitat for Humanity International
Hawkins Delafield and Wood
Holy Spirit Missionary Sisters, USA-JPIC
Homes for America
Housing Assistance Council
Housing Partnership Network
ICF International

Islamic Society of North America
LeadingAge
Local Initiatives Support Corporation
LOCUS: Responsible Real Estate Developers And Investors
Low Income Investment Fund
Make Room
NAACP
National Affordable Housing Trust
National Alliance Of Community Economic Development Associations
National Association of Affordable Housing Lenders
National Association of Latino Community Asset Builders
National Association of the Deaf
National Black Justice Coalition
National Center for Healthy Housing
National Church Residences
National Coalition for Latinxs with Disabilities
National Coalition for the Homeless
National Community Development Association
National Consumer Law Center
National Council on Independent Living
National Development Council
National Disability Rights Network
National Education Association
National Fair Housing Alliance
National Health Care For The Homeless Council
National Housing and Rehabilitation Association
National Housing Law Project
National Housing Resource Center
National Housing Trust
National Law Center for Homelessness and Poverty
National League of Cities
National Leased Housing Association
National Low Income Housing Coalition
National Network to End Domestic Violence
National Stabilization Trust
National Urban League
Natural Hazard Mitigation Association
Natural Resources Defense Council
NeighborWorks Capital
NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice
Nixon Peabody
Oxfam America
Paralyzed Veterans of America
PathStone Corporation
PolicyLink
Portlight Inclusive Disaster Strategies
Poverty & Race Research Action Council
Preservation Of Affordable Housing

Prosperity Now
Public Advocates
Refugees International
RESULTS
Right to the City
Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law
Smart Growth America
Stewards of Affordable Housing For The Future
Technical Assistance Collaborative
The Arc of the United States
The Schiff Group
UnidosUS
Universal Living Wage
Voices for Civil Justice
Volunteers of America

State and Local Organizations (251)

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| Alaska Community Development Corporation | AK |
| Love INC of the Kenai Peninsula | AK |
| Center for Fair Housing | AL |
| Fair Housing Center of Northern Alabama | AL |
| Association of Programs for Rural Independent Living | AR |
| City of Fort Smith | AR |
| Housing Authority of Star City | AR |
| California Housing Consortium | CA |
| California Housing Partnership Corporation | CA |
| Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund | CA |
| Downtown Women's Center | CA |
| EAH Housing | CA |
| Fair Housing Advocates of Northern California | CA |
| Fair Housing Council of Orange County | CA |
| Fair Housing Council of the San Fernando Valley | CA |
| Greater Napa Valley Fair Housing Center | CA |
| Housing California | CA |
| Inland Fair Housing and Mediation Board | CA |
| Oakland Tenants Union | CA |
| PYATOK Architects | CA |
| Sacramento Regional Coalition to End Homelessness | CA |
| Voces Verdes | CA |
| Western Center on Law and Poverty | CA |
| American Planning Association, Colorado | CO |
| Colorado Coalition for the Homeless | CO |
| Connecticut Housing Coalition | CT |
| Connecticut State Independent Living Council | CT |

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| DC Coalition Against Domestic Violence | DC |
| Affordable Homeownership Foundation | FL |
| Catalyst Miami | FL |
| Central Florida Community Action Agency | FL |
| Community Justice Project | FL |
| Consumer Credit and Budget Counseling, Inc d/b/a National Foundation for Debt Management | FL |
| De Hostos Senior Center, Inc. | FL |
| El Dorado Recycling | FL |
| Fair Housing Center of the Greater Palm Beaches | FL |
| Family Matters of Flagler | FL |
| First Community Christian Pentecostal Church of God | FL |
| Florida Alliance for Assistance Services and Technology | FL |
| Florida Alliance of Community Development Corporations | FL |
| Florida Housing Coalition | FL |
| Florida Legal Services | FL |
| Florida Non-Profit Housing | FL |
| Florida Supportive Housing Coalition | FL |
| Habitat for Humanity Alachua | FL |
| Habitat for Humanity Florida | FL |
| Habitat for Humanity of Hardee County | FL |
| Habitat for Humanity of Lakeland | FL |
| Housing Leadership Council | FL |
| Jacksonville Area Legal Aid | FL |
| Local Initiatives Support Corporation, Jacksonville | FL |
| Metro North Community Development Corporation | FL |
| Miami Homes For All | FL |
| New Florida Majority | FL |
| Organize Florida | FL |
| Pahokee Housing Authority | FL |
| Personal Growth Center | FL |
| Refuge Ministries of Tampa Bay/International | FL |
| Samuel's House | FL |
| South Florida Community Development Coalition | FL |
| St. Petersburg Neighborhood Housing Services, Inc. dba Neighborhood Home Solutions | FL |
| The Farmworker Association of Florida | FL |
| The Hendrickson Company | FL |
| United Way of Florida | FL |
| United Way South Sarasota County | FL |
| Youth and Family Alternatives | FL |
| Community Outreach Training Center | GA |
| Fuller Center for Housing | GA |

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| Georgia Advancing Communities Together | GA |
| Georgia Coalition Against Domestic Violence | GA |
| KFB Business Consultants | GA |
| Metro Atlanta Task Force for the Homeless | GA |
| Our Fine Arts, These | GA |
| Polk County Housing Trust Fund | IA |
| Intermountain Fair Housing Council | ID |
| LINC | ID |
| South Central Community Action Partnership | ID |
| Chicago Urban League | IL |
| Housing Choice Partners | IL |
| Open Communities | IL |
| Provincial Council Clerics of St. Viator | IL |
| Fair Housing Center of Central Indiana | IN |
| Lake County Community Economic Development | IN |
| Ellsworth Housing Authority | KS |
| First World Architects Studio | KY |
| Alembic Community Development | LA |
| Cenla Community Action Committee | LA |
| Greater New Orleans Fair Housing Action Center | LA |
| Greater New Orleans Housing Alliance | LA |
| Jane Place Neighborhood Sustainability Initiative | LA |
| Louisiana Budget Project | LA |
| Mental Health America of Louisiana | LA |
| MQVN Community Development Corporation | LA |
| Sapience Strategies | LA |
| Edward A. Thomas Esq., LLC | MA |
| Homes for Families | MA |
| Massachusetts Association of Community Development Corporations | MA |
| Massachusetts Fair Housing Center | MA |
| Uniting Citizens for Housing Affordability in Newtown | MA |
| Autism Women's Network | MD |
| Baltimore Neighborhoods | MD |
| Montgomery County Coalition for the Homeless | MD |
| Montgomery County Housing Opportunity Council | MD |
| Montgomery Housing Partnership | MD |
| Partnership for Inclusive Disaster Strategies | MD |
| Project PLASE | MD |
| Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities Coalition | MD |
| Urban Atlantic | MD |
| Freeport Housing Trust | ME |
| Maine Affordable Housing Coalition | ME |
| Building Families First Community Organization | MI |

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| Michigan Community Reinvestment Coalition | MI |
| Michigan Historic Preservation Network | MI |
| Michigan State University, College of Law, Housing Law Clinic | MI |
| Integrated Community Solutions | MN |
| Metropolitan Interfaith Council on Affordable Housing | MN |
| Our Spring Lake Store | MN |
| Community LINC | MO |
| Empower Missouri | MO |
| ADAPT Montana | MT |
| Blueprints Consulting | NC |
| Disability Rights, Education, Activism, and Mentoring (DREAM) | NC |
| Financial Pathways of the Piedmont | NC |
| Habitat for Humanity Wilson Area | NC |
| North Carolina Housing Coalition | NC |
| Minot Area Homeless Coalition | ND |
| Friend Housing Authority | NE |
| Sisters of Mercy West Midwest Justice Team | NE |
| Fair Share Housing Center of New Jersey | NJ |
| Habitat for Humanity Northern Ocean | NJ |
| Housing Community Development Network of New Jersey | NJ |
| Manufactured Home Owners Association of New Jersey | NJ |
| Monarch Housing Associate | NJ |
| New Jersey Tenants Organization | NJ |
| New Mexico Coalition to End Homelessness | NM |
| Arbor Housing And Development | NY |
| Care for the Homeless | NY |
| Carroll Gardens Association | NY |
| Center for New York City Neighborhoods | NY |
| City of Mt. Vernon | NY |
| CLUSTER | NY |
| Columba Kavanagh House | NY |
| Community League of the Heights | NY |
| Fair Housing Justice Center | NY |
| Fordham Bedford Housing Corporation | NY |
| Geel Community Services | NY |
| Habitat for Humanity of Ontario County | NY |
| Habitat for Humanity of Tompkins and Cortland Counties | NY |
| Independent Living Center of the Hudson Valley | NY |
| Local Initiatives Support Corporation, New York City | NY |
| Morningside Heights Multi-Cultural Tenants Organization | NY |
| Neighborhood Preservation Coalition of New York State | NY |
| New York Democratic County Committee | NY |
| New York Housing Coalition of Chemung County | NY |

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| New York Housing Conference | NY |
| New York State Tenants and Neighbors Coalition | NY |
| Northern Regional Center For Independent Living | NY |
| Project Hospitality | NY |
| Rebuilding Together New York City | NY |
| Rensselaer County Housing Resources | NY |
| Resource Center for Independent Living | NY |
| Rochester/Monroe County Homeless Continuum of Care, Inc. | NY |
| RUPCO | NY |
| Rural Housing Opportunities Corporation | NY |
| Town of Hamburg | NY |
| Troy Rehabilitation and Improvement Program | NY |
| YWCA of Rochester and Monroe County | NY |
| Barbara Poppe and Associates | OH |
| Miami Valley Fair Housing Center | OH |
| Sisters of Charity | OH |
| YMCA Columbus | OH |
| DeBruker, Inc. | OK |
| Baker Schonchin Holdings Corporation | OR |
| ROSE Community Development | OR |
| Allentown Housing Authority | PA |
| Beaver County Behavioral Health | PA |
| Capreit | PA |
| Liberty Resource | PA |
| Nazareth Housing Services | PA |
| Scranton Counseling Center | PA |
| Uptown Partners of Pittsburgh | PA |
| Bill's Kitchen | PR |
| Casa La Providencia | PR |
| Coalición de Coaliciones Pro Personas sin Hogar de PR | PR |
| Corporacion La Fondita de Jesus | PR |
| Fundacion CAF | PR |
| Instituto Especial para el Desarrollo Integral del Individuo, la Familia y la Comunidad, Inc. | PR |
| MAVI-NEADA | PR |
| PathStone Community Development Corporation of Puerto Rico | PR |
| Taller Salud | PR |
| HousingWorks Rhode Island | RI |
| County of Lexington, Community Development | SC |
| Habitat for Humanity Abbeville/McCormick Counties | SC |
| Habitat for Humanity Aiken County | SC |
| Habitat for Humanity of Cherokee Co | SC |
| Habitat for Humanity of Kershaw County | SC |

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| Habitat for Humanity of Spartanburg Inc. | SC |
| Habitat for Humanity of York County | SC |
| South Carolina Association of Habitat Affiliates | SC |
| The Fifteenth Avenue Baptist Community Development Corporation | TN |
| Advocacy Outreach | TX |
| Cambridge Development Group | TX |
| Center for Public Policy Priorities | TX |
| City of Amarillo | TX |
| City of Beaumont | TX |
| Coalition For The Homeless of Houston/Harris County | TX |
| Commonwealth Companies | TX |
| Dental Health Arlington | TX |
| Family Restoration and Economic Empowerment | TX |
| House the Homeless | TX |
| Housing Channel | TX |
| Houston Center For Independent Living | TX |
| I Am Pleased Development Center | TX |
| Inclusive Communities Project | TX |
| Local Initiatives Support Corporation, Houston | TX |
| Local Initiatives Support Corporation, San Antonio | TX |
| Mid-Coast Family Services | TX |
| National Alliance on Mental Illness, Abilene | TX |
| New Hope Housing | TX |
| North Texas Fair Housing Center | TX |
| Northwest Assistance Ministries | TX |
| Proyecto Azteca | TX |
| San Antonio Housing Authority | TX |
| Texas Affiliation of Affordable Housing Providers | TX |
| Texas Appleseed | TX |
| Texas Association of Community Development Corporations | TX |
| Texas Homeless Network | TX |
| Texas Housers | TX |
| Texas Organizing Project | TX |
| Texas Tenants' Union | TX |
| True Casa Consulting | TX |
| Valley AIDS Council | TX |
| Volunteers of America Texas | TX |
| Family Promise | UT |
| Utah Housing Coalition | UT |
| Habitat for Humanity Farmville Area | VA |
| Habitat for Humanity Virginia | VA |
| Piedmont Housing Alliance | VA |
| Prosperity Housing | VA |

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| SP Group LLC | VA |
| U.S. Virgin Islands Housing Authority | VI |
| Brattleboro Area Affordable Housing | VT |
| Vermont Affordable Housing Coalition | VT |
| Greenfield Institute | WA |
| Mercy Housing Northwest | WA |
| OPAL Community Land Trust | WA |
| Seattle/King County Coalition on Homelessness | WA |
| Tenants Union of Washington State | WA |
| Whatcom Skagit Housing | WA |
| Tenant Resource Center | WI |
| Wisconsin Partnership for Housing Development | WI |