

**Add your Name to the Reissued Letter to Ways and Means Leadership:**

**Dedicate any savings from changes to tax benefits for housing to  
provide affordable rental housing to low-income families**

**Deadline: November 3**

*Supported by more than [2,300 groups](#) from United for Homes including Council of Large Public Housing Associations, Corporate Social Responsibility Association, National Council of La Raza, AFL-CIO Housing Investment Trust, Children's Defense Fund, Corporation for Supportive Housing, Jesuit Conference USA, Jewish Community Action, National Manufactured Home Owners Association of America, Mercy Housing, National AIDS Housing Coalition, National Alliance to End Homelessness, National Association of Real Estate Brokers - Investment Division, Housing Counseling Agency (NID-HCA), National Council on Independent Living, National Disability Rights Network, National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty, National Leased Housing Association, National Low Income Housing Coalition, Network: A National Catholic Social Justice Lobby, Sisters of Mercy of the Americas, Institute Leadership Team, United Methodist Church-Global Board of Church and Society, Volunteers of America and more!*

Dear Colleague,

In February, 34 members sent a letter to Ways and Means Chairman Kevin Brady and Ranking Member Richard Neal requesting that any savings derived from changes to tax benefits for housing be dedicated to providing affordable rental housing for low-income families.

At the request of other members, we are going to resubmit this letter at the end of the month. If you did not sign the letter originally and wish to be added, please add your name by October 27th. [The letter is nearly identical to the one sent in February.](#)

As Congress considers the impending Republican tax plan, we affirm that changes to the tax code should ensure that low-income families, veterans, people with disabilities and the elderly have a safe and affordable place to live. Thus, any savings from changes made to generous housing benefits provided to homeowners, should be used to greatly expand the resources for affordable rental housing for the more than 7 million low-income families who pay more than half their incomes for housing.

Nationwide, only one in four eligible families receive the housing assistance they are entitled to. Our nation provides more housing benefits to higher-income households than to extremely-low income ones. Inadequate resources lead to long waiting lists and life on the edge for more than 11 million families. One in two rental households pay more than 30 percent of their gross income on rent and utilities; one in four rental households pay more than 50 percent. Nowhere in the United States can someone work 40 hours a week at minimum wage and afford a one bedroom apartment at a fair market rent.

One of the most praised books of 2016 was *Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City* by Matthew Desmond. It chronicles the housing challenges faced by families who earn too little to afford the rent and yet receive no governmental housing assistance. It would be shameful if changes made to tax benefits for homeownership were not set aside to help meet the housing needs of seniors, people with disabilities, veterans and low-income families.

We should better target our federal housing investments to help middle-income homeowners and address our dire affordable rental housing crisis. This month, the National Association of Home Builders and the Mortgage Bankers Association expressed openness to a rewrite of homeowner tax breaks as part of a broader tax bill.

For more information, or to add your name -- if you were not a signator on the February letter -- contact Carol Wayman at [Carol.Wayman@mail.house.gov](mailto:Carol.Wayman@mail.house.gov) or 225.4755 in Mr. Ellison's office or Sean Gard at [Sean.Gard@mail.house.gov](mailto:Sean.Gard@mail.house.gov) in Ms. Moore's office by COB on November 3.

Sincerely,

/s/

Keith Ellison  
Member of Congress

/s/

Gwen Moore  
Member of Congress

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Dear Ways and Means Chairman Brady and Ranking Member Neal:

Our nation is in the midst of an affordable housing crisis. Growing demand has resulted in higher rents. More families than ever before struggle to pay their rent each month. Every Congressional district and state across the nation is impacted. Yet, despite the need, federal investments that reduce homelessness and housing poverty are sorely underfunded. As a result, just one in four low-income families eligible for federal housing assistance receive the help they need.

As your Committee drafts tax legislation, we urge you to seize this opportunity by redirecting any savings derived from changes to tax benefits for housing be dedicated to providing affordable rental housing to low-income families. This would include tax benefits that benefit some homeowners, such as the mortgage interest deduction, property tax deduction, capital gains exclusion, etc. —whether through direct changes or by increasing the standard tax deduction. Revenue derived from these sources should be dedicated to expanding highly effective affordable rental housing programs that serve families with the greatest needs, like the national Housing Trust Fund, the Low Income Housing Tax Credit with changes to ensure deeper income targeting and other rental assistance and housing production programs.

In doing so, we can make the critical investments that our nation needs to help America's families, our local communities and our national economy thrive. We know the key to reducing poverty and increasing economic mobility is access to safe and affordable homes. Increasing

access to affordable homes bolsters child and family success, economic growth, wages, and productivity. And, each dollar invested in developing and preserving affordable homes boosts local economies by leveraging public and private resources to generate income—including resident earnings and additional local tax revenue—and supports job creation and retention.

At a time when America's housing affordability crisis continues to reach new heights, our nation should be investing resources into programs that serve those with the most acute housing needs. For this reason, we urge you to redirect any savings derived from reforming the mortgage interest deduction or other homeownership benefits —whether through direct changes or by increasing the standard tax deduction — into rental housing programs that serve low-income families and individuals.

Sincerely,