United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 13, 2024

The Honorable Brian Schatz
Chair
Subcommittee on Transportation and
Housing and Urban Development
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Cindy Hyde-Smith
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Transportation and
Housing and Urban Development
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chair Schatz and Ranking Member Hyde-Smith:

As you develop the Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development Appropriations bill, we urge your continued support for the Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) homeless assistance programs. Specifically, we urge you to provide: 1) at least $4.75 billion for McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Grants (HAG), including at least $500 million for Emergency Solutions Grants, 2) at least $34.5 billion for Tenant-Based "Section 8" Rental Assistance (TBRA), and 3) consistent funding for HUD's Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing Program (HUD-VASH).

Home prices and rents have far out-paced average wage gains over the past four years and led to a rapid rise in the number of unhoused Americans. According to HUD's 2023 Annual Homelessness Assessment Report to Congress, more individuals were experiencing homelessness on a single night in January 2023 than any year since this reporting began in 2007. Year-to-year, over 70,000 more individuals were experiencing homelessness in 2023 – a 12 percent increase.

Robust funding for HAG and TBRA will help more families weather increased housing costs and quickly connect people experiencing homelessness back to a home with essential wraparound services. Indeed, HAG programs are proven, long-term solutions to the homelessness crisis that use the "Housing First" model, a concept first adopted by the George W. Bush Administration that helps communities avoid costs associated with homelessness, lessening the burdens on law enforcement and emergency health care providers. These funds will also help ensure service providers have the funding they need to hire and retain experienced staff to execute effective homelessness assistance strategies and best serve unhoused individuals and families.

Finally, we must also maintain our long-standing investment in HUD-VASH, which assists veterans who are homeless and their families in finding and sustaining permanent housing. Unfortunately, veterans, including those who served in Iraq and Afghanistan, continue to be at high risk of homelessness due to their elevated incidence of mental and physical injuries. We must do all that we can to ensure that those who have bravely served our country do not then find themselves without a home.

Thank you for your consideration of these requests and we look forward to working with you on the FY 2025 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development Appropriations bill.

Sincerely,

Jack Reed
United States Senator

Sherrod Brown
United States Senator

Robert Menendez
United States Senator

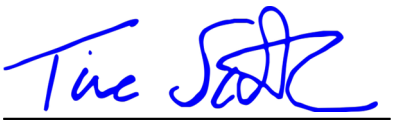
Jon Tester
United States Senator

Mark R. Warner
United States Senator

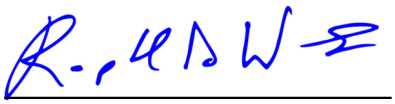
Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator

Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator

Catherine Cortez Masto
United States Senator



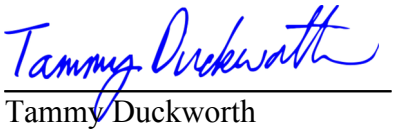
Tina Smith
United States Senator



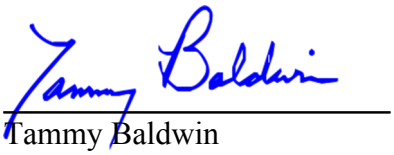
Raphael Warnock
United States Senator



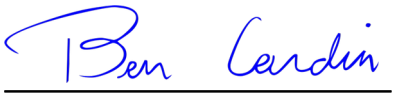
Laphonza Butler
United States Senator



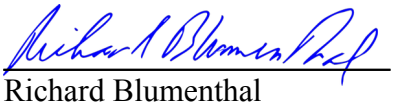
Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator



Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator



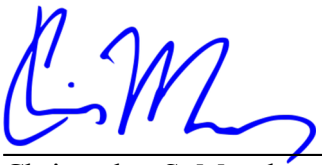
Benjamin L. Cardin
United States Senator



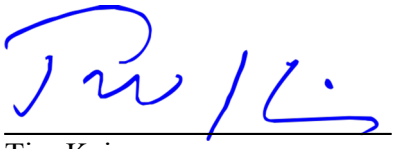
Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senator



Christopher S. Murphy
United States Senator



Tim Kaine
United States Senator



Gary C. Peters
United States Senator



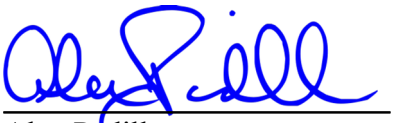
Maria Cantwell
United States Senator



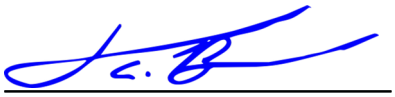
Debbie Stabenow
United States Senator



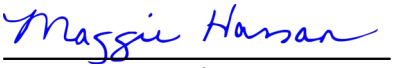
Jacky Rosen
United States Senator



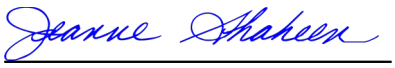
Alex Padilla
United States Senator



Cory A. Booker
United States Senator



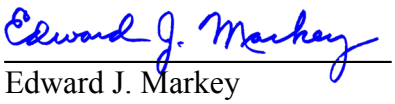
Margaret Wood Hassan
United States Senator



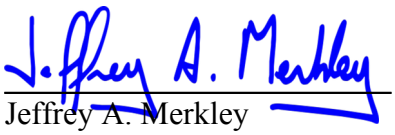
Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator



Mazie K. Hirono
United States Senator



Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



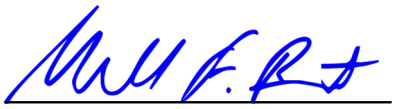
Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator



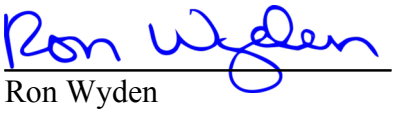
Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator



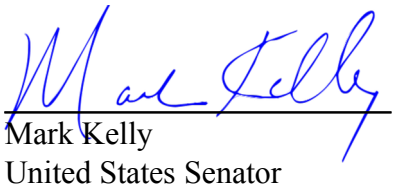
Thomas R. Carper
United States Senator



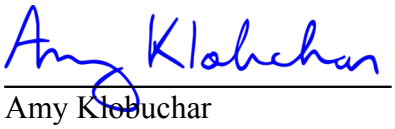
Michael F. Bennet
United States Senator



Ron Wyden
United States Senator



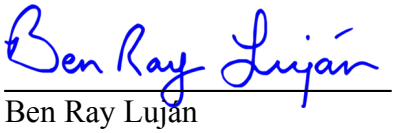
Mark Kelly
United States Senator



Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator



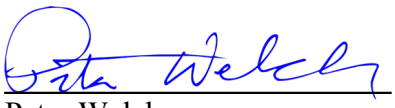
Angus S. King, Jr.
United States Senator



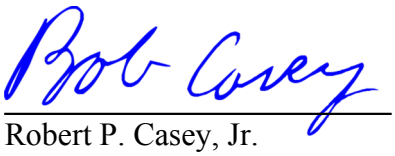
Ben Ray Luján
United States Senator



Martin Heinrich
United States Senator



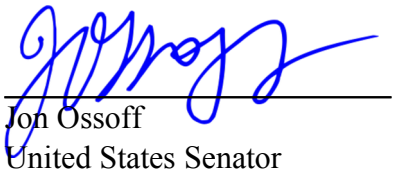
Peter Welch
United States Senator



Robert P. Casey, Jr.
United States Senator



Christopher A. Coons
United States Senator



Jon Ossoff
United States Senator



Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator



Bernard Sanders
United States Senator



Kyrsten Sinema
United States Senator