

February XX, 2020

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

To Speaker Pelosi:

We, the undersigned organizations, write to thank you for your leadership in advancing plans for a much-needed infrastructure package and urge you to include robust investments in affordable, accessible housing for America's lowest-income seniors, people of color, people with disabilities, families with children, and other individuals. In particular, we urge you to include \$70 billion to fully address the capital-needs backlog of public housing repairs, as well as \$5 billion to create and preserve affordable and accessible homes through the national Housing Trust Fund (HTF).

The nation's affordable housing crisis impacts rural, suburban and urban communities alike. According to [research](#) from the National Low Income Housing Coalition, there is a national shortage of 7 million rental homes affordable and available to the nation's 11 million extremely low-income renter households. Fewer than 4 affordable and available rental homes exist for every 10 extremely low-income renter households nationwide. As a result, 71% of these families pay at least half of their incomes on rent, forcing them to make impossible choices between paying rent and buying healthy food or needed medication. Every state and congressional district is impacted.

The HTF is the first new federal housing resource in a generation exclusively targeted to build and preserve housing affordable to people with the lowest incomes. Because the HTF is administered as a block grant, each state has the flexibility to decide how to best use HTF resources to address its most pressing housing needs. Most states have chosen to use their HTF investments to build, rehabilitate, or preserve affordable and accessible rental housing for extremely low-income veterans, seniors, people with disabilities or special needs, and people experiencing homelessness.

In addition to the critical need to produce more homes for the lowest-income renters, we must also preserve our nation's public housing infrastructure. Public housing is home to nearly 1 million households and plays a critical role in providing safe, decent, accessible housing to families with the greatest needs. Significant capital investment is needed, however, for the rehabilitation and preservation of public housing. Due to decades of declining capital funds, public housing now faces a backlog of capital repair needs of as much as \$70 billion, threatening the quality and even the existence of these homes. As a result, HUD is unable to make the repairs needed to preserve its public housing stock and has lost 10,000 to 15,000 public housing apartments each year to obsolescence or decay.

The connection between affordable, accessible housing and infrastructure is clear: like roads and bridges, affordable housing is a long-term asset that helps communities and families thrive. For this reason, it is critical that any infrastructure package include significant resources – including \$5 billion for the HTF and \$70 billion for public housing – to build and preserve homes that are affordable and accessible to our nation's lowest-income households.

Sincerely,