

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
Senate Majority Leader
United States Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

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

September 20, 2021

Dear Leader Schumer, Speaker Pelosi:

As you begin to consider the budget reconciliation bills enacting President Biden's American Families Plan, we urge you to ensure funding for housing remain a key component of the bills. Congress has a once in a generation opportunity to invest in our nation's affordable and low income housing stock to ensure safe and climate resilient homes into the future. The currently proposed expansion of affordable and public housing resources that will ultimately help millions of low-income and vulnerable households across the nation not only find and maintain safe, stable and affordable housing but also thrive in their communities. As 33 mayors representing communities across 18 states and the District of Columbia, we are very supportive of this critically needed funding and write to urge Congress to maintain the highest level of funding and expansion of these vital housing resources as Congress continues to advance budget reconciliation legislation.

As cities we know – housing is infrastructure. It is a fundamental right and bipartisan issue. Housing is a part of the fabric of our cities and communities. Although we were disappointed housing was excluded from the bipartisan infrastructure bill, we are greatly heartened by the House and Senate committee drafts that ensure robust funding levels for housing construction, low income, and public housing.

It is critical that the legislation include:

- \$75 Billion in Housing Choice Voucher Program funding to fund new incremental housing choice vouchers, tenant protection vouchers and program supports to help many more vulnerable and low-income households achieve housing stability;
- \$80 Billion for Public Housing to mitigate the billions in public housing capital needs backlog faced by public housing authorities across the nation;
- \$35 Billion in HOME Investment Partnerships Program to fund the construction, purchase, or rehabilitation of affordable homes for low-income people; and
- Changes to housing financing tools that will more effectively and efficiently leverage federal resources for the creation of more critically needed affordable housing, including: lowering the "50 percent test" bond financing threshold to 25 percent for the 4 percent Housing Credit, expanding the 9 percent Housing Credit by 60 percent, and creating additional basis boosts for Extremely Low Income and 4 percent and Housing bond projects.

- \$4.5 Billion for the Unlocking Possibilities Program to provide grants to jurisdictions that take steps to reduce needless barriers to producing affordable housing through reforming zoning codes.

These critically needed increases to affordable and public housing funding and enhancements to the Housing Credit and Tax-Exempt Private Activity Bonds would allow states to more effectively address the unique affordable housing needs in cities and towns across the country. We as mayors see firsthand the vital need for affordable and public housing among families in our communities. Like roads and bridges, affordable, accessible housing in strong, resourced communities is a long-term investment that provide low income and vulnerable families, the stability needed to thrive, while furthering neighborhood revitalization. Our nation's affordable and homelessness crises have only been exacerbated by the hardships brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic over the past year and a half, and these resources are now needed more than ever.

Together, we urge Congress to capitalize on this opportunity to invest in our communities for generations to come. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Mayor Bill de Blasio, New York, NY

Mayor Eric Garcetti, Los Angeles, CA

Mayor Lori Lightfoot, Chicago, IL

Mayor Kim Janey, Boston, MA

Mayor London N. Breed, San Francisco, CA

Mayor Libby Schaaf, Oakland, CA

Mayor John Giles, Mesa, AZ

Mayor Robert Garcia, Long Beach, CA

Mayor Ted Wheeler, Portland, OR

Mayor Vi Lyles, Charlotte, NC

Mayor Darrell Steinberg, Sacramento, CA

Mayor Sam Liccardo, San Jose, CA

Mayor Martha Guerrero, West Sacramento, CA

Mayor Jenny A. Durkan, Seattle, WA

Mayor Jim Kenney, Philadelphia, PA

Mayor Lucy Vinis, Eugene, OR

Mayor Todd Gloria, San Diego, CA

Mayor Michael B. Hancock, Denver, CO
Mayor Muriel Bowser, Washington DC
Mayor Stephen T. Williams, Huntington, WV
Mayor Jane Castor, Tampa, FL
Mayor Cassie Franklin, Everett, WA
Mayor Kate Gallego, Phoenix, AZ
Mayor Eugene W. Grant, Seat Pleasant, MD
Mayor Steven L. Reed, Montgomery, AL
Mayor Hardie Davis, Jr., Augusta, GA
Mayor Jerome A. Prince, Gary, IN
Mayor Tishuara Jones, St. Louis, MO
Mayor Sean M. Spiller, Montclair, NJ
Mayor Byron Brown, Buffalo, NY
Mayor William R. Johnson, Holly Hill, SC
Mayor Timothy Ragland, Talladega, AL
Mayor Jerry L. Demings, Orange County, FL