

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 8, 2019

The Honorable Susan Collins
Chairman
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Transportation,
Housing and Urban Development
184 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Jack Reed
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Transportation,
Housing and Urban Development
125 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Collins and Ranking Member Reed:

As you begin consideration of the Fiscal Year 2020 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development (THUD), and Related Agencies Appropriations bill, we strongly encourage the Subcommittee to continue the Federal government's commitment to community development programs at the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and support \$3.8 billion in formula funds for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program.

The CDBG program is one of the Federal government's most effective means to revitalize low- and moderate-income communities across the country. CDBG funding supports homeownership, housing rehabilitation, infrastructure improvements and economic development projects while encouraging additional local investment. Every \$1.00 of CDBG funding leverages another \$4.09 in additional public and private investments. CDBG makes its way into local economies through an extensive network of local organizations and remains a necessary resource for families and communities.

Over 1,200 state and local governments receive annual CDBG funding directly and every State, Territory, and Congressional District receives or has access to CDBG funds. The importance of this funding to meet the unique needs of local communities is widely recognized, and we find it troubling that the President has once again proposed eliminating CDBG altogether. Doing so would shift an insurmountable cost to local communities.

CDBG Strengthens Families and Communities through Homeownership. CDBG funds are used to assist creditworthy, working families with down payment and closing cost assistance to purchase a home. Homeownership stabilizes neighborhoods, allows families to build assets, and adds to the local tax base. Communities may use CDBG funding for lead-based paint testing and abatement, among other activities. Between FY05 and FY18, CDBG was used to provide safe and affordable housing to over 1.433 million low- and moderate-income households.

CDBG Builds Local Infrastructure. CDBG funds are used by communities for infrastructure improvements, including safe drinking water and sanitary sewer systems, street improvements, and the development of child care centers and health clinics that provide health services and dental care to low-income children. Since FY05, CDBG public infrastructure improvements have directly benefited over 47 million low- and moderate-income people nationwide.

CDBG is a Jobs Generator. Through economic development activities, including microenterprise assistance, direct assistance to businesses, and the development of public facilities, CDBG has created or retained 419,755 jobs across the country. Communities and local partners have used CDBG funding to provide employment training to over 1.4 million individuals since FY05.

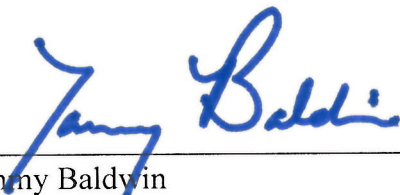
CDBG Helps Seniors Live Independently. CDBG funds are used to rehabilitate the homes of low- and moderate-income elderly persons to allow them to age in place, thereby avoiding costly assisted living and nursing home care. CDBG provides resources to Meals on Wheels and other local food programs to ensure our low-income seniors receive daily nourishment and contact. Further, CDBG funds are used to build senior centers to allow seniors to receive health and recreational services to stay engaged and healthy. Communities have used CDBG funds to provide services to over 13.7 million seniors.

CDBG Invests in Our Next Generation. Local communities use CDBG funds to provide afterschool programs for low-income children and summer jobs for low-income youth, as well as to build recreation centers to provide a safe outlet for learning, sports and personal growth. CDBG funding has been used to provide services to over 13 million youth, and youth centers funded through CDBG have provided direct assistance to over 637,000 youth.

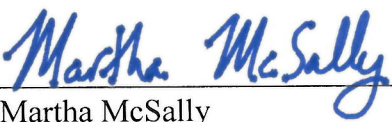
CDBG Creates Safer Communities. Communities use CDBG to work with local police departments and neighborhood leaders to fight crime and make neighborhoods safer places to live and work by creating and expanding neighborhood watch groups, making safety improvements to homes and businesses, and encouraging local police sub-stations to move into high crime areas. CDBG has provided crime awareness and prevention services to over 739,000 people.

We understand that the subcommittee must make difficult decisions, however, we urge you to provide \$3.8 billion for the CDBG program in the FY20 THUD Appropriations bill. Thank you for your consideration of this request and your continued support of community development and revitalization.

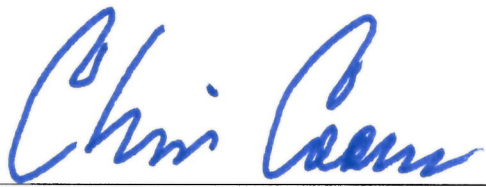
Sincerely,



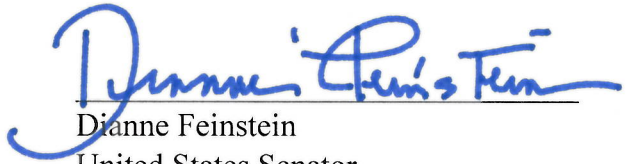
Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator



Martha McSally
United States Senator



Christopher A. Coons
United States Senator



Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator



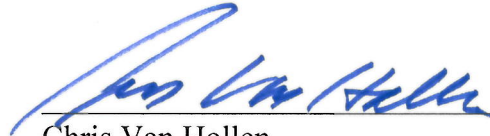
Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



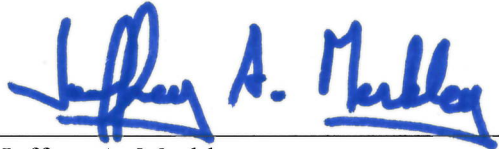
Doug Jones
United States Senator



Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator



Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator



Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator



Thomas R. Carper
United States Senator



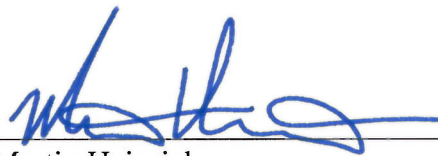
Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senator



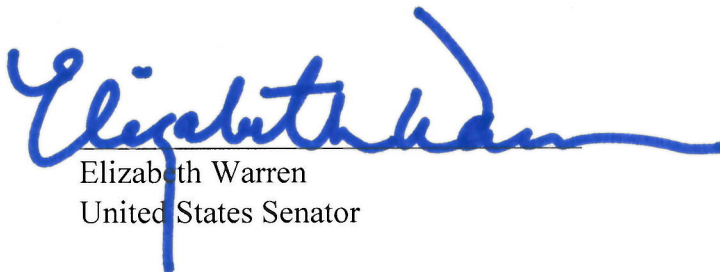
Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator



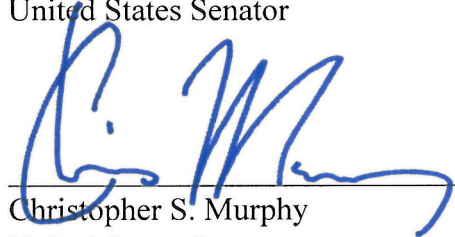
Catherine Cortez Masto
United States Senator



Martin Heinrich
United States Senator



Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



Christopher S. Murphy
United States Senator

Bob Casey, Jr.

Robert P. Casey, Jr.
United States Senator

Ron Wyden

Ron Wyden
United States Senator

Bert Sanders

Bernard Sanders
United States Senator

Mazie Hirono

Mazie K. Hirono
United States Senator

Amy Klobuchar

Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator

Edward J. Markey

Edward J. Markey
United States Senator

Kamala Harris

Kamala D. Harris
United States Senator

Tim Kaine

Tim Kaine
United States Senator

Debbie Stabenow

Debbie Stabenow
United States Senator

Maggie Hassan

Margaret Wood Hassan
United States Senator

Sherrod Brown

Sherrod Brown
United States Senator

Tina Smith

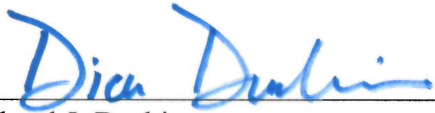
Tina Smith
United States Senator

Jeanne Shaheen

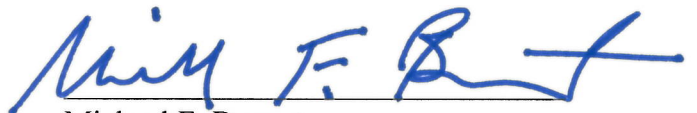
Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator

Robert Menendez

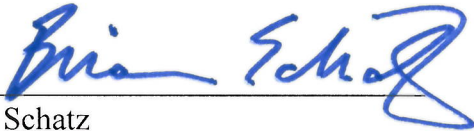
Robert Menendez
United States Senator



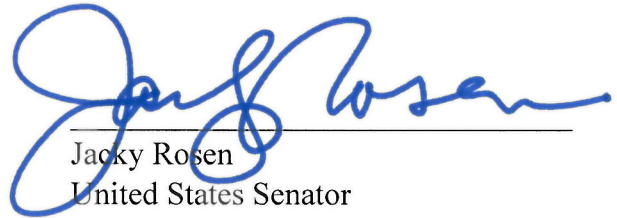
Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator



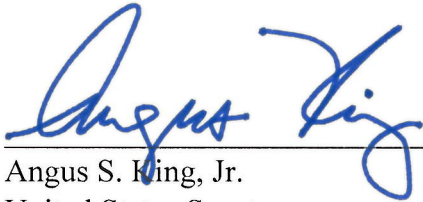
Michael F. Bennet
United States Senator



Brian Schatz
United States Senator



Jacky Rosen
United States Senator



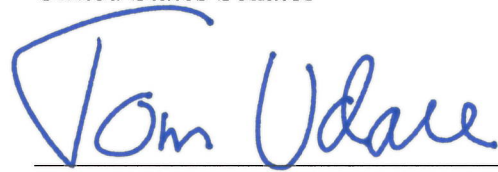
Angus S. King, Jr.
United States Senator



Mark R. Warner
United States Senator



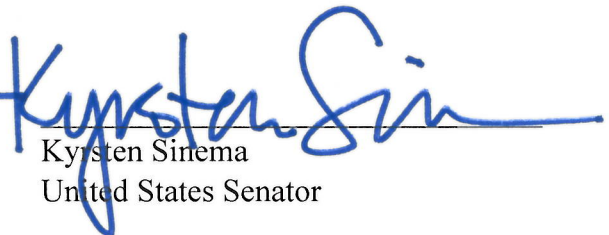
Benjamin L. Cardin
United States Senator



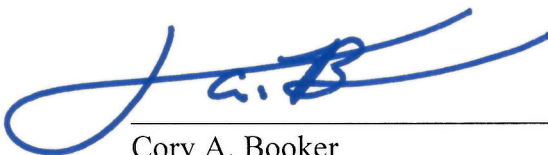
Tom Udall
United States Senator



Joe Manchin III
United States Senator



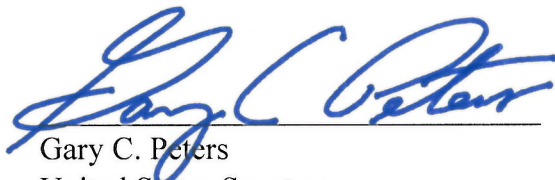
Kyrsten Sinema
United States Senator



Cory A. Booker
United States Senator



Maria Cantwell
United States Senator



Gary C. Peters
United States Senator