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A home is the *foundation.*

August 23, 2011

Melody Barnes
Director, Domestic Policy Council
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, DC 20500

Gene B. Sperling
Director, National Economic Council
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue.
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Ms. Barnes and Mr. Sperling,

The 45 undersigned national organizations strongly urge you to include funding for jobs in housing in the President's jobs-creation plan. Specifically, we recommend that the plan include at least \$10 billion for the National Housing Trust Fund.

Once funded, the National Housing Trust Fund will produce, rehabilitate, preserve, and operate rental housing that is affordable for households with incomes at or below 30% of the area median (extremely low income). **Every \$10 billion spent through the National Housing Trust Fund will create 122,000 new jobs in the construction trades and 30,000 new ongoing jobs in the operation of the rental housing.**¹

In addition to the jobs that will be created, funding the National Housing Trust Fund in the jobs plan will advance other objectives set by the Obama Administration. Funding for the National Housing Trust Fund is a key element to the success of the Administration's plan to end homelessness for veterans and people with disabilities in five years and families with children in ten years. Funds from the National Housing Trust Fund can be coupled with properties acquired through the disposition of foreclosed homes owned by Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac, and FHA, so that some of these properties can be converted into affordable housing.

As you know, funding for the National Housing Trust Fund has been included in each of the President's budgets since he took office, but has not yet been enacted. We advocated for \$10 billion for the

¹ Estimated job numbers based on March 2010 report by National Association of Home Builders on economic impact of a LIHTC project and assumption that average NHTF unit cost is \$100,000.

National Housing Trust Fund in the 2009 stimulus bill, but Congressional appropriators were reluctant to include it then, because program regulations had not been developed. Fortunately, HUD is near completion of the regulations now, so any funding allocated could be spent immediately.

All indicators continue to report that the most serious housing problem faced by Americans is the shortage of rental housing that extremely low income households can afford.² Today, there 10 million extremely low income renter households in our country and only 6.5 million housing units they can afford. They remain the only income group for whom there is an absolute shortage of homes.³

We urge you to consider an investment in affordable housing to be as important to the future of our country as investments in schools, technology, and infrastructure. Without the foundation of safe and decent homes, children cannot thrive, adults cannot prosper, and seniors cannot live out their years in dignity.

Thank you for your attention to our request. A delegation from the National Housing Trust Fund Campaign is available to meet with you at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

Catholic Charities USA
Center for Community Change
Coalition on Human Needs
Community Action Partnership
Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities Housing Task Force
Corporation for Supportive Housing
Enterprise Community Partners
Friends Committee on National Legislation
Housing Assistance Council
Housing Partnership Network
Jesuit Conference
Jewish Council for Public Affairs
LeadingAge
Lutheran Services in America
Mercy Housing
Mennonite Central Committee U.S., Washington Office
NAACP
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd
National AIDS Housing Coalition
National Alliance to End Homelessness
National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth
National Center for Healthy Housing
National Center on Family Homelessness

² See Bravve, E., DeCrappeo, M., Pelletiere, D., & Crowley, S. (2011). *Out of reach 2011: Renters await the recovery*. Washington, DC: National Low Income Housing Coalition. Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University. (2011). *America's rental housing: Meeting challenges, building on opportunities*. Cambridge, MA: Author. U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. (2011). *Worst case housing needs 2009: A report to Congress*. Washington, DC: Author. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. (2011). *Rental market dynamics 2007-2009*. Washington, DC: Author.

³ Pelletiere, D. (2010). *A preliminary analysis of the 2009 and 2007 rental affordability gaps from the 2009 and 2007 American housing surveys*. Washington, DC: National Low Income Housing Coalition.

National Coalition for Asian Pacific American Community Development
National Coalition for Community Reinvestment
National Coalition for the Homeless
National Council of La Raza
National Council on Independent Living
National Fair Housing Alliance
National Health Care for the Homeless Council
National Housing Conference
National Housing Law Project
National Housing Trust
National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty
National Low Income Housing Coalition
NETWORK, A National Catholic Social Justice Lobby
PolicyLink
Poverty & Race Research Action Council
Sisters of Mercy Institute Justice Team
Stewards of Affordable Housing for the Future
Technical Assistance Collaborative
The United Methodist Church General Board of Church and Society
Union for Reform Judaism
United Way Worldwide
Volunteers of America