



Campaign for Housing and Community Development Funding

Working to ensure maximum federal resources for housing and community development.

August 17, 2011

Senator Patty Murray
448 Senate Russell Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Representative Jeb Hensarling
129 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Senator Max Baucus
511 Senate Hart Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Representative Xavier Becerra
1226 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Senator John Kerry
218 Senate Russell Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Representative David Camp
341 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Senator Jon Kyl
730 Senate Hart Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Representative James Clyburn
2135 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Senator Robert Portman
B40D Senate Dirksen Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Representative Fred Upton
2183 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Senator Pat Toomey
B40B Senate Dirksen Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Representative Christopher Van Hollen
1707 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Members of the Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction:

The members of the Campaign for Housing and Community Development (CHCDF) would like to thank you for agreeing to serve as a member of the Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction charged with recommending further actions to reduce the federal debt.

CHCDF is an education, strategy and action hub for national organizations dedicated to adequate federal housing and community development funding for low-income families and communities. CHCDF members represent a full continuum of national housing and community development organizations, including faith-based, private and public sector, financial intermediary, civil rights, developer, and advocacy groups. These groups work to meet the needs of low and moderate income renters and homeowners in urban, suburban, rural and tribal communities, including the elderly, people with disabilities, and people experiencing homelessness.

We write to you today with a simple request: we ask that your Committee only support proposals, whether to raise revenue or cut spending, that do no harm to low income Americans. This includes ensuring that low income households do not experience increased housing or other cost burdens due to cuts in assistance programs. The debt limit agreement acknowledged this important principle in exempting many low-income (mostly entitlement) programs from sequestration. Yet the ten-year discretionary spending caps enacted into law will have a disproportionate impact on low-income families. These households should not be asked to bear the burden of additional sacrifice.

Further cuts in nondefense discretionary spending would likely decimate federal housing and community development programs. These programs are efficient and have powerful impacts on individual and community well-being, not only directly by supporting stable housing for vulnerable people, but also through their effects on economic growth, education, employability, community health, and job creation, particularly for those at the bottom of the economic ladder who have been hardest hit by the recession.

To achieve deficit reduction that does not further harm low-income Americans, it is essential that the Committee consider expenditures beyond nondefense discretionary spending and include significant revenue increases in any agreement endorsed by the Committee. As the Committee examines tax provisions, we urge you to recognize that several tax expenditures facilitate community development investments and expand the availability of affordable housing for low income households and so should be protected.

Thank you for your consideration of these views. Members of our organization stand ready to meet with you or with the Committee staff, to provide additional information about the importance of providing affordable housing to everyone in our country. Please contact Melissa Quirk at melissa@nlihc.org or 202-662-1530 x230 with questions for any CHCDF members.

Sincerely,

Community Action Partnership
Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities Housing Task Force
Corporation for Supportive Housing
Council of Large Public Housing Authorities
Council of State Community and Economic Development Agencies
Enterprise Community Partners
Housing Assistance Council
Jesuit Conference
LeadingAge (*formerly AAHSA*)
Local Initiatives Support Coalition
Lutheran Services in America
Mennonite Central Committee U.S., Washington Office
Mercy Housing
National AIDS Housing Coalition
National Alliance on Mental Illness
National Alliance of Community Economic Development Associations
National Alliance to End Homelessness
National American Indian Housing Council
National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials
National Center for Healthy Housing
National Center on Family Homelessness
National Coalition for Asian Pacific American Community Development
National Coalition for the Homeless
National Community Development Association
National Council of State Housing Agencies
National Disability Rights Network
National Fair Housing Alliance
National Housing Conference
National Housing Trust
National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty

National Leased Housing Association
National Low Income Housing Coalition
National NeighborWorks Association
National Network for Youth
National Network to End Domestic Violence
NETWORK, A National Catholic Social Justice Lobby
Rebuilding Together
Stewards of Affordable Housing for the Future
The Arc of the United States
Travelers Aid International

cc: Hon. John Boehner
Hon. Nancy Pelosi
Hon. Harry Reid
Hon. Mitch McConnell