

November 15, 2013

The Honorable Barbara Mikulski
Chairwoman
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
Chairwoman
Subcommittee on Transportation-HUD
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Susan Collins
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Transportation-HUD
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senate Appropriations Leaders:

We thank you for your service as you work to finalize funding decisions for FY14. We particularly thank you for protecting critical housing and community development programs during the FY14 appropriations process. The undersigned eighteen (18) national organizations of local elected officials, housing and community development professionals, and representatives of non-profit organizations, collectively known as the Community Development Block Grant Coalition, thank you for providing \$3.150 billion for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) formula grants and \$1.0 billion for HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME) Program formula grants and ask that you support these amounts in final FY14 appropriations legislation.

Our organizations write today in support of CDBG and HOME. The CDBG program has been cut by nearly \$1 billion since 2010 and the HOME program has seen a reduction of over \$800 million. In an article in Politico this year, David Rogers noted that “CDBG’s fall is the most striking example yet of what’s become a genuinely historic rollback of domestic discretionary spending.” The federal investment provided by these two programs creates jobs, leverages local dollars, and adds to the overall GDP. In this economy, State and local governments and their non-profit partners need these programs more than ever to assist our most needy citizens. We ask you to consider the impact these reductions have had on communities nationwide. These cuts have a magnified impact on the more vulnerable people in our communities – senior citizens, those experiencing homelessness, single parent families, persons with disabilities, and veterans. Because of these cuts, some CDBG and HOME-funded local programs have been zeroed out entirely.

CDBG provides vital funding to projects and services within each of the 1,169 cities, counties, and States which receive the funding; projects that directly impact the lives of our low- and moderate-income citizens. CDBG provides the flexibility to fund a myriad of activities, fill gaps where needed, and attract additional funding to projects. This combination of CDBG with other funding sources adds to our national economy and to the betterment of the lives of our citizens through improved neighborhoods and a better quality of life. HOME provides needed funds to

provide affordable housing to a range of low income households through the development of rental housing and through tenant-based rental assistance. The HOME program also provides funding for downpayment assistance and rehabilitation of owner-occupied homes.

CDBG Facts

•**Nearly 1,200 state and local governments receive CDBG funds.**

•**CDBG is a jobs generator.** Between FY05-FY12, CDBG created/ retained 302,622 jobs.

•**CDBG leverages other funds.** For every \$1.00 of CDBG investment, another \$3.55 in private and public dollars is leveraged.

•**CDBG provides safe, decent, affordable housing.** Between FY05-FY12, CDBG assisted over one million low- and moderate-income homeowners rehabilitate their homes, provided down payment and closing cost assistance to qualified home buyers, and assisted homeowners with lead-based paint abatement.

•**CDBG provides crucial public improvements to communities.** Between FY05-FY12, CDBG public improvements benefitted over 30 million low- and moderate-income people nationwide. These public improvements included senior centers, child care centers, group homes for persons with disabilities, shelters for victims of domestic violence and homeless veterans, health clinics providing vaccinations and dental care to low-income children, sanitary water and sewer systems, safe streets, and improved drainage systems, among others.

•**CDBG provides needed public services.** Between FY05-FY12, CDBG provided public services to over 95 million low- and moderate-income households. These services included employment training, meals and other services to the elderly, services to help abused and neglected children, assistance to local food banks, and many other services.

HOME Facts

•**Over 600 state and local government receive HOME funds.**

•**HOME creates affordable housing.** Since 1992, the program has created over one million units of decent, safe, affordable housing.

•**HOME assists extremely-low income populations.** More than 50% of HOME funds have assisted very-low income and extremely low-income households.

•**HOME leverages other funds.** For every \$1.00 dollar of investment, another \$4.00 in public and private resources is leveraged.

In closing, CDBG and HOME funding are the fuel used to support many local economies by providing resources for the needy, local job creation and opportunities for growth. Both programs have suffered major cuts in funding over the last three years and continued cuts would

have a significant impact on the loss of jobs, loss of assistance to low- and moderate-income people, and particularly hurt vulnerable populations such as the homeless, children, and the elderly. We urge you to maintain your support of \$3.150 billion for CDBG formula grants and \$1.0 billion for HOME formula grants for FY14.

Respectfully,

American Planning Association
Council of State Community Development Agencies
Feeding America
Habitat for Humanity International
International Economic Development Council
Local Initiatives Support Corporation
National League of Cities
National Association for County Community and Economic Development
National Association of Development Organizations
National Association of Counties
National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials
National Association of Local Housing Finance Agencies
National Community Development Association
National Rural Housing Coalition
National Urban League
Rebuilding Together
U.S. Conference of Mayors
YWCA USA