



September 28, 2021

The Honorable Alex Padilla  
United States Senate  
112 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

**RE: Support \$327 billion in Transformative Affordable Housing Investments through the House Financial Services Infrastructure/Economic Recovery Bill**

Dear Senator Padilla,

East Bay Housing Organizations (EBHO) urges you to ensure that the funding levels for rental assistance, public housing, and the national Housing Trust Fund receive no less than the amounts previously approved by the House Financial Services Committee -- \$327 billion investments in affordable housing. It is critical that any cuts or changes to the overall package must not come at the expense of proven solutions for households with the greatest needs.

EBHO is a non-profit, member-driven organization with over 300 organizational and individual members. For 35 years, we have worked to preserve, protect, and create affordable housing opportunities for low-income communities in the East Bay by educating, advocating, organizing, and building coalitions. We believe that solutions to California's severe housing crisis must be comprehensive. As such, we support a multi-pronged effort based on the three principles of production of new housing, preservation of existing housing that is affordable, and protection of residents from unaffordable rent increases, eviction, displacement, and homelessness.

To ensure the lowest-income renters are not left behind as our country continues to recover from the pandemic, Congress should prioritize the highest level of funding possible for the following key programs to build and preserve homes affordable to people with the lowest incomes: 1) the national Housing Trust fund, 2) public housing, and 3) housing choice vouchers.

The national Housing Trust Fund (nHTF) is the first new federal housing resource in a generation that exclusively targets the building and preservation of rental homes to people with the lowest incomes and is the only federal housing production program that directly addresses the market failure that is an underlying cause of the housing crisis. Because households of color, particularly Black households, are more likely to have extremely low incomes, a significant investment in the nHTF is also an investment in advancing racial equity.

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For decades, Congress has divested from public housing, resulting in over \$70 billion in unmet capital backlog needs and a loss of 10,000 to 15,000 units of public housing every year to obsolescence or decay. Public housing is a critical resource to ensuring people with the greatest needs have a safe, affordable, and accessible place to call home, and a bold investment to preserve this community asset must be included in any strategy to address America's housing crisis.

Finally, a major cause of today's housing crisis is the fundamental mismatch between rising housing costs and stagnant incomes, especially for people with the lowest incomes. Rental assistance has a proven track record of reducing homelessness and housing poverty. Congress should provide a robust investment in this critical tool for helping the lowest-income people afford decent, stable, and accessible housing.

As the economic recovery package moves through Congress, we urge you to ensure that the funding levels for rental assistance, public housing, and the national Housing Trust Fund receive no less than the amounts approved by the House Financial Services Committee on September 14: \$90 billion for rental assistance, \$80 billion to preserve public housing, and \$37 billion to the national Housing Trust Fund. Any cuts or changes to the overall package must not come at the expense of proven solutions for households with the greatest needs.

Thank you for fighting to maintain HFSC's robust funding levels for programs that meet the needs of the lowest-income people.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jeffrey Levin".

Jeffrey Levin  
Policy Director