

February 14, 2018

Chairman Thad Cochran  
S-128, The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Vice Chairman Patrick Leahy  
S-146A, The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Chairman Rodney Frelinghuysen  
H-305, The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Ranking Member Nita Lowey  
1016 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Cochran, Vice Chairman Leahy, Chairman Frelinghuysen, Ranking Member Lowey,

We write on behalf of over one million households across the nation who live in public housing. These residents include low-income seniors, persons with disabilities, working families and children. As Mayors representing cities across the country, we witness the critical need for funding every day in our communities. Federal support is vital to serving the needs of our neighbors living in public housing and we ask that you ensure full funding for public housing programs from the Department Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

HUD estimates that there are currently 1.3 million units of occupied public housing managed by nearly 3,400 public housing authorities (PHAs). We stand together recognizing that housing is a right. Public housing residents are proud, hardworking members of their neighborhoods. Many are multi-generational and are pillars of their communities. They work, innovate and give back to their neighbors and simply want to continue to live in the cities they love.

As you know, public housing offers much more than a roof – it affords parents the ability to put children through school, preserves seniors' independence and gives families the opportunity to stay in neighborhoods they have lived in for generations. Affordability continues to be a challenge for cities large and small. Now more than ever, public housing is a lifeline for working families.

Public housing, whether rural or urban, is an invaluable resource for America's lowest-income families. The need is especially great as cities across the nation are forced to address housing issues with ever shrinking budgets. The difficulty of finding an affordable place to live becomes a greater challenge as cities continue to grow and

become more crowded. This has been exacerbated for years as the federal government has decreased its investment in public housing. Cities have had to fill the gaps, taking on the responsibility of addressing repairs and capital improvements.

Now that a long-term budget agreement, with increased funding levels, has been agreed to by the leaders in both chambers, we write to ask you to dedicate a portion of that increase to restore federal investment in public housing. Public Housing Authorities are dealing with leaky roofs, crumbling structures, and old piping. These issues, if not immediately addressed, will lead to larger problems that will jeopardize the ability of people to reside in these much needed apartments. Without a renewed commitment from the federal government, Public Housing Authorities will not be able to tackle these matters, let alone modernize their public housing systems.

On behalf of thousands of public housing residents in cities across America, we thank you for your support as we work to improve and create more housing opportunities for low income families. We urge you to propose targeted increases to HUD's public housing programs in order to improve the lives and living conditions for all public housing authority residents.