



Monday, April 27, 2020

Speaker Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House of Representatives
United States Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

Re: San Francisco's and California's Affordable Housing Priorities for Federal Stimulus Assistance

Dear Speaker Pelosi,

The COVID-19 pandemic reveals how critical safe, stable, homes are to our communities' ability to get and stay healthy. We live in interconnected communities, where each person's wellness depends on everyone else's, and we will weather this emergency and prepare for the next by uniting behind policies that ensure all people have access to safe and stable housing.

We, the undersigned organizations from across California, urge you to put into place:

- 1. Sweeping rental/debt relief for all households which are no longer able to pay their rents or mortgages as a result of COVID-19**
- 2. The designation of affordable housing as essential infrastructure in any future Infrastructure Stimulus package.**

The COVID-19 crisis has exacerbated our nation's existing housing crisis, even while revealing how critical safe, stable housing is for our communities' health. **People have lost their jobs at a scale rarely seen in American history that is threatening our nation's fundamental ability to keep people housed.** At the same time, it is abundantly clear that housing is one of the most critical tools we have to protect our communities from COVID-19, and the necessary foundation to recovery ahead. To shelter in place, Americans must have shelter. We must take emergency actions to get and keep people in homes to shelter in place during the pandemic.

Institute sweeping rental/debt relief for all households impacted by COVID

We strongly urge you to provide additional swift and sweeping rental/debt relief for **all** households which are no longer able to pay rent or mortgages as a result of COVID, and emergency housing investments for those who are currently homeless.

- Support the inclusion of \$100 billion in rental assistance funds in a vehicle that can meet the scale of rent relief needed to provide rent relief to millions of Californians and households nationally who can no longer pay their rents as a result of COVID. It is critical that this relief be made available to all households regardless of immigration status; every person's health depends on everyone else's, and we must ensure all of us can access the care we need. We also request that \$10 billion of this assistance be reserved to support existing affordable housing developments (with break-even rental assistance), so that affordable housing providers can keep their doors open and their tenants stably housed. Without this rental assistance, many affordable housing providers could be financially insolvent within 60-90 days. Affordable housing providers in the Bay Area are already reporting 15%-20% loss in rental income for rent that was due on April 1st with even steeper declines expected in May.
- Establish a \$75 billion homeowner assistance fund for low-income homeowners who can no longer afford to pay their mortgages. We also urge you to provide mortgage and other debt and regulatory relief specifically to non-profit affordable housing owners to support them throughout the crisis. We can ill afford to allow our already insufficient affordable housing stock to be lost due to economic strain.
- Provide \$11.5 billion for Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG), and \$3 billion for emergency section 8 vouchers for people experiencing homelessness.
- Congress should implement a national, uniform moratorium on evictions and foreclosures that assures renters will not lose their homes during a pandemic where our collective health depends on each of us staying home. This moratorium should be coupled with sufficient rental assistance to the tenant or debt relief to the property owner to ensure that projects remain financially solvent and tenants stay housed.

Further we urge you to support a federal Infrastructure Stimulus package that invests in communities, jobs, and housing that can restart our economic engine, get people back to work, and lead to a strong and sustainable recovery.

Designate Affordable Housing as Essential Infrastructure and invest \$500 billion to ensure that everyone has a stable and affordable place to call home

- Classify subsidized housing as infrastructure and invest \$500 billion to meet the actual need for permanent affordable homes at the national scale, going beyond what was already introduced in H.R. 5187.
- Expand the Low-Income Housing Tax Credits, project-based section 8 vouchers, and the HOME and CDBG programs, as well as new programs that can also be used for the acquisition of homes off of the speculative market so that we can build and preserve the affordable homes Californians and households throughout the country desperately need now and into the future.

- Make existing federal resources dedicated to affordable housing go further by reducing the current tax-exempt bond “50% test” to 25% permanently, this will ensure that states like California can build twice as many affordable homes while using existing resources our state already has available.

Lawmakers must act with the urgency and resources that will ensure that all of our neighbors, no matter their income, race, immigration status, have a place to get and stay healthy in this time of pandemic, and ensure a stable recovery. This health and economic crisis underscores how foundational housing is to the health, equity, and economic success of all Americans and our nation, and exposes the need for Congressional action immediately and ahead. We can no longer tolerate systems and the status quo that perpetuates the “haves” and the “have nots,” the housed and unhoused. Our goal should not be to put things back to the way things were, but to build the just and sustainable communities we always deserved.

Let us permanently address our vulnerability to COVID and future emergencies with urgent action to end homeless and to address the lack of affordable housing in California and our country. Every person deserves a stable place to live, be safe, and thrive in health and well-being. We invite you to join us and help make it happen.

We thank you for your leadership, commitment and continuing hard work on behalf of all Californians.

Sincerely,

Amie Fishman
Executive Director
Non-Profit Housing Association of
Northern California

Tomiquia Moss
Executive Director
All Home

And the Undersigned Organizations,

Bay Area Community Services (BACS)
Bay Area LISC
Bay Area Regional Health Inequities Initiative (BARHII)|Rise Together
Blue Sky Center
BRIDGE Housing Corporation
Bonnewit Development Services
Burbank Housing
California Asset Building Coalition
California Coalition for Rural Housing (CCRH)
California Coalition for Youth
Californians for Disability Rights Inc.
California Housing Partnership

California Reinvestment Coalition
California YIMBY
Center for Sustainable Neighborhoods
Charities Housing
Chinatown Community Development Center (CCDC)
CHISPA
Community Arts Stabilization Trust
Community Economics, Inc.
Community Housing Development Corporation (CHDC)
Community Housing Partnership
Compass Family Services
Dempsey Associates
Devine & Gong
Dry Creek Rancheria Band of Pomo Indians
EAH Housing
East Bay Housing Organizations (EBHO)
East Bay Local Asian Development Corporation (EBALDC)
Eden Housing
Generation Housing
Grantland L. Johnson Institute of Leadership Development
Grow The Richmond
Habitat for Humanity East Bay/Silicon Valley
Habitat for Humanity Greater San Francisco
Haight Ashbury Neighbors for Density
Hello Housing
Housing Leadership Council of San Mateo County (HLC)
Housing Trust Silicon Valley
Homelessness Prenatal Program
Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary/Loretto Sisters
Jamboree Housing
Kevin Carter Poor People's Campaign
Larkin Street Youth Services
Los Angeles LISC
Mercy Housing California
Metropolitan Transportation Commission/Association of Bay Area Governments
(MTC/ABAG)
MidPen Housing Corp.
Monument Impact
Mutual Housing California
National Alliance on Mental Illness - Sacramento
Neighborly Santa Cruz
North Valley Housing Trust

Organize Sacramento
OWL SacCap
Palo Alto Housing
PATH
Peninsula for Everyone
People for Housing - Orange County YIMBY
PEP Housing
Positive Resource Center
Quantum Housing Corporation
RCAC
Regional Asthma Management and Prevention (RAMP)
Resources for Community Development (RCD)
Rural LISC
Rural Smart Growth Task Force
Sacramento Metro Advocates for Rail and Transit
Sacramento Central Labor Council, AFL-CIO
Sacramento Housing Alliance
Sacramento Homeless Organizing Committee
Sacramento Regional Coalition to End Homelessness
Sacred Heart Community Services
Safe Routes Partnership
San Diego LISC
San Francisco Housing Development Corp. (SFHDC)
San Francisco Foundation
San Francisco Housing Action Coalition (SFHAC)/Bay Area Housing Action Coalition (BayHAC)
San Francisco Bay Area Planning and Urban Research Association (SPUR)
San Francisco YIMBY
Self-Help Enterprises
Silicon Valley Community Foundation (SVCF)
SV@Home
TechEquity Collaborative
Tenderloin Neighborhood Development Corporation (TNDC)
The Core Companies
The John Stewart Company
The Kelsey
The Unity Council
Unite Here! Local 483
United Food & Commercial Workers Local 5
United Latinos, Promoviendo Acción Cívica
Vernazza Wolfe Associates
Volunteers of America National Services

Working Partnerships USA
YIMBY Action
YIMBY Law