

January 12, 2010

Sen. Max Baucus
Chairman, Senate Finance Committee
219 Dirksen Building
Washington, DC 20510

Sen. Charles Grassley
Ranking Member, Senate Finance Committee
219 Dirksen Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Baucus and Ranking Member Grassley:

The undersigned organizations write in strong support of the *Expanding Building Incentives Act of 2009* (S. 1637). We greatly appreciate the leadership of Senators Snowe, Feinstein and Bingaman in sponsoring this important bill, and believe this is a major step toward a much-needed federal commitment to ensuring that affordable housing is more energy efficient. As the Senate considers comprehensive energy or green jobs legislation, we urge you to include S. 1637 as part of that bill.

Greening affordable housing—making it more energy efficient, healthier and more environmentally responsible—is a proven, cost effective way to decrease energy and transportation costs, make homes healthier and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Based on years of research, a recent study¹ found that making housing energy efficient is cost effective—the estimated lifetime savings exceed the initial investment made to green affordable housing.

Greening affordable housing will also help to ensure that the enormous promise of the emerging green economy includes opportunities for everyone in our society. Many states and cities have recognized that building development and environmental sustainability are inextricably linked, and have provided both incentives and requirements for building greener affordable housing.

Nevertheless, bringing green development in affordable housing to scale requires that the federal government become a committed partner in these efforts. We greatly appreciate your expressed recognition of these issues and willingness to work with the housing community to address them as energy legislation moves through the legislative process

We believe the Expanding Building Incentives Act of 2009 will help achieve this goal while creating thousands of green jobs. According to Economic Opportunity Studies, for every \$1 million spent on greening affordable housing, 27 direct and indirect jobs are created². We hope the Senate will include the Expanding Building Incentives Act while advancing energy or green jobs legislation, and we look forward to working with the Senate to help make that happen. Please call upon us if we can provide additional information or assistance.

¹ Enterprise Community Partners, *Incremental Cost, Measurable Savings: Enterprise Green Communities Criteria*. October 2009

² Economic Opportunity Studies, *How Many Workers Does the Weatherization Assistance Program Employ Now? What Jobs Will the Recovery Act Offer?* February 2009

Sincerely,

Affordable Housing Investors Council
Affordable Housing Tax Credit Coalition
Alliance for Healthy Homes
Alliance to Save Energy
American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy
American Institute of Architects
American Planning Association
Center for Neighborhood Technology
Council of Large Public Housing Authorities
E.R. Bacon Development Corporation
Global Green USA
Habitat for Humanity
Housing Assistance Council
Living Cities
Local Initiatives Support Corporation
National Affordable Housing Management Association
National Alliance of Community Economic Development Associations
National Association of Housing & Redevelopment Officials
National Association of Local Housing Finance Agencies
National Association of State & Local Equity Funds
National Center for Healthy Housing
National Coalition for Asian Pacific American Community Development
National Community Development Association
National Housing Conference
National Housing Trust
National Leased Housing Association
National Low Income Housing Coalition
National Multi Housing Council
Reconnecting America
Smart Growth America
U.S. Green Building Council

CC: Members of the Senate Finance Committee