March 14, 2018

The Honorable Mario Diaz-Balart
Chairman
Subcommittee on Transportation,
Housing and Urban Development,
and Related Agencies
2358-A Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable David Price
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Transportation
Housing and Urban Development,
and Related Agencies
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Diaz-Balart and Ranking Member Price:

As the subcommittee develops its FY19 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies appropriations bill, we respectfully urge you to prioritize commitment for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, one of the most effective federal programs for growing local economies and for providing a lifeline to families and communities, with proven results. We request the subcommittee provide at least $3.3 billion for CDBG.

Since FY 2005, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has collected accomplishment data for the CDBG program. The data highlight the program’s flexibility to design and implement strategies tailored to meet local needs and priorities. It has provided funds in every state, including housing investments, public infrastructure improvements, and economic development, while also providing public services, including services for seniors, youth, the disabled, and employment training.

Despite being a key tool for aiding our communities, the CDBG program, like many programs, has taken a share of deep cuts in recent years, falling substantially—by nearly $1.4 billion since FY2001. While the program helps more than 1,200 cities, counties, states, and rural areas meet the needs of low- and moderate-income people and communities, funding cuts have severely weakened the ability of grantees to revitalize their communities and respond to local need. We share your commitment to the most effective use of taxpayer dollars and believe that these grants have proven highly effective. Based on the data that grantees have reported to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development over the past nine years (FY2005 – FY2017) CDBG has:

- Helped over 1.435 million low- and moderate-income persons through single-family, owner-occupied rehabilitation, homeownership assistance, energy-efficient improvements, and lead-based abatement, among other activities;

- Created or retained 401,992 jobs for low- and moderate-income people through a variety of economic development activities;
- Benefited over 45 million low- and moderate-income persons through public improvements including senior centers, child care centers, and centers for people with disabilities;

- Benefited over 139 million low- and moderate-income persons through public services such as employment training, meals and other services to the elderly, services for abused and neglected children, assistance to local food banks, and other services;

- Helped Seniors Live Independently. CDBG funds are used to rehabilitate the homes of low- and moderate-income elderly persons to allow them to age in place, thereby, avoiding costly assisted living and nursing home care. CDBG provides resources to Meals on Wheels and other local food programs to ensure our low- and moderate-income seniors receive daily nourishment and contact. Further, CDBG funds are used to build community centers to allow seniors to receive health and recreational services to stay engaged and healthy;

- Strengthened Families and Communities through Homeownership. CDBG funds are used to assist credit worthy, working families with down payment and closing cost assistance to purchase a home. Homeownership stabilizes neighborhoods, allows families to build assets, and adds to the local tax base;

- Created Safer Communities. Local communities use CDBG to work with local police departments and neighborhood leaders to fight crime and make neighborhoods safer places to live and work by creating and expanding neighborhood watch groups, making safety improvements to homes and businesses, and encouraging local police sub-stations to move into high crime areas;

- Invested in Our Next Generation. Local communities use CDBG funds to provide afterschool programs to low-income children, summer jobs for low-income youth, and build recreation centers to provide a safe outlet for learning, sports and personal growth.

Additionally, every $1.00 of CDBG leverages an additional $4.09 in non-CDBG funding.

CDBG makes its way into the local economy through an extensive network of local organizations and remains a lifeline for families and communities. It is one federal program that touches the lives of nearly every American in some fashion. Over 7,200 communities have access to the funds and rely on the program to enhance their life and community. Every State, Territory, and Congressional District receives or has access to CDBG funds. The pressing need in the current economy for these funds remains critical.

While we understand the difficult fiscal decisions we must make in Washington, we appreciate your consideration of this important request and strongly urge you to support at least $3.3 billion for the CDBG program in FY19 to help grow local economies.

Sincerely,

2 CDBG
Robert A. Brady
Member of Congress

Lou Barletta
Member of Congress

James P. McGovern
Member of Congress

Peter T. King
Member of Congress

Maxine Waters
Member of Congress

Gregory Meeks
Member of Congress

Peter A. DeFazio
Member of Congress

Rick Larsen
Member of Congress

Anthony Brown
Member of Congress

Jimmy Panetta
Member of Congress

Peter Welch
Member of Congress

John K. Delaney
Member of Congress

Yvette D. Clarke
Member of Congress

Ted Deutch
Member of Congress

Eliot L. Engel
Member of Congress

Chellie Pingree
Member of Congress

Eric Swalwell
Member of Congress

Glenn ‘GT’ Thompson
Member of Congress

Linda T. Sánchez
Member of Congress

Juan Vargas
Member of Congress

Lois Frankel
Member of Congress

David N. Cicilline
Member of Congress

Tim Walz
Member of Congress

Ryan A. Costello
Member of Congress

3 CDBG
Joyce Beatty  
Member of Congress  

Bill Foster  
Member of Congress  

Michael R. Turner  
Member of Congress  

Suzanne Bonamici  
Member of Congress  

Niki Tsongas  
Member of Congress  

Mark Takano  
Member of Congress  

Elijah E. Cummings  
Member of Congress  

Keith Ellison  
Member of Congress  

Michael E. Capuano  
Member of Congress  

Joseph Crowley  
Member of Congress  

Michelle Lujan Grisham  
Member of Congress  

Donald M. Payne, Jr.  
Member of Congress  

Grace Napolitano  
Member of Congress  

Stephen F. Lynch  
Member of Congress  

Michael F. Doyle  
Member of Congress  

Brian Higgins  
Member of Congress  

John Yarmuth  
Member of Congress  

Carlos Curbelo  
Member of Congress  

Gene Green  
Member of Congress  

Paul Tonko  
Member of Congress  

Dave Loebsack  
Member of Congress  

Adam B. Schiff  
Member of Congress  

Jerrold Nadler  
Member of Congress  

Danny K. Davis  
Member of Congress  

4  CDBG
Tom O’Halleran  
Member of Congress

Frederica S. Wilson  
Member of Congress

Jamie Raskin  
Member of Congress

Marc A. Veasey  
Member of Congress

G. K. Butterfield  
Member of Congress

Stacey E. Plaskett  
Member of Congress

Kathleen M. Rice  
Member of Congress

Scott H. Peters  
Member of Congress

Darren Soto  
Member of Congress

Suzan DelBene  
Member of Congress

Josh Gottheimer  
Member of Congress

Louise M. Slaughter  
Member of Congress

Steve Pearce  
Member of Congress

Diana DeGette  
Member of Congress

Mike Thompson  
Member of Congress

Charlie Crist  
Member of Congress

Salud O. Carbajal  
Member of Congress

Adam Smith  
Member of Congress

Filemon Vela  
Member of Congress

David Scott  
Member of Congress

Don Young  
Member of Congress

Martha McSally  
Member of Congress

John Yarmuth  
Member of Congress

John B. Larson  
Member of Congress

8  CDBG
Terri A. Sewell  
Member of Congress

Joseph P. Kennedy, III  
Member of Congress

Earl L. “Buddy” Carter  
Member of Congress

Richard M. Nolan  
Member of Congress

Raul Ruiz  
Member of Congress

Adam Kinzinger  
Member of Congress

Sean Patrick Maloney  
Member of Congress

Colleen Hanabusa  
Member of Congress

Ruben Gallego  
Member of Congress

Bruce Poliquin  
Member of Congress

Barbara Lee  
Member of Congress

Brad Sherman  
Member of Congress

Aumua Amata Coleman Radewagen  
Member of Congress

Dutch Ruppersberger  
Member of Congress