

June 19, 2018

The Honorable Susan Collins
Chair, Appropriations Subcommittee on
Transportation, Housing and Urban Development
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Jack Reed
Ranking Member, Appropriations Subcommittee on
Transportation, Housing and Urban Development
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Chair, Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Ranking Member, Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairwoman Collins, Ranking Member Reed, Chairman Shelby, and Ranking Member Leahy:

On behalf of the more than 1,600 local, state, and national organizations supporting the HOME Coalition, we would like to thank your Committee for supporting the proven outcomes of the HOME Investment Partnerships Program. The recent funding increase in fiscal year (FY) 2018 and the continued commitment to that higher funding level in your FY 2019 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development Appropriations Bill represent a significant step in restoring funding to one of the most effective, flexible and locally-driven tools to help states and communities increase access to safe, decent and affordable housing for low-income households.

The HOME Coalition would like to thank the Subcommittee for its continued bipartisan support of the HOME Program in contrast with the Administration's proposed elimination of HOME in both its 2018 and 2019 budget requests. The HOME Coalition is encouraged by what states and localities will be able to accomplish with their increased FY 2018 HOME allocations: producing new units where affordable housing is scarce, rehabilitating housing where quality is a challenge, and providing the right mix of rental and homeownership housing.

During conference negotiations with the House, the HOME Coalition does ask that a technical—yet important—fix found in this year's House bill be included in the final version of the bill, which would suspend the 24-month commitment deadline for Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDOs). This commitment deadline for Participating Jurisdictions has been included in enacted appropriations legislation since FY 2017, but the suspension was not also applied to CHDOs. The 24-month commitment deadline has become redundant following the implementation in 2013 of the HOME Final Rule, which includes more meaningful deadlines but has made the 24-month commitment deadline burdensome, especially for smaller Participating Jurisdictions and CHDOs. As there was not intent to exclude CHDOs, the HOME Coalition requests the Committee to include this common-sense fix in the final version of the bill.

Communities across the country are facing increased demand for HOME funding, including providing additional gap financing in Low Income Housing Tax Credit (Housing Credit) deals impacted by lower corporate tax rates enacted as part of tax reform; financing more Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) conversions as the FY 2018 omnibus more than doubled the cap of eligible public housing units; and redirecting their HOME funds to respond and rebuild after natural disasters.

Thank you again for your bipartisan leadership. We look forward to working with you to ensure Congress continues to restore funding for the HOME Program. If you have any questions about this letter, please contact Althea Arnold (aarnold@ncsha.org) with the National Council of State Housing Agencies or Clay Kerchof (ckkerhof@enterprisecommunity.org) with Enterprise Community Partners.

Sincerely,

The HOME Coalition