

November 30, 2011

The Honorable Barack Obama  
President of the United States  
The White House  
Washington, DC 20500

The Honorable Tom Vilsack  
Secretary  
U. S. Department of Agriculture  
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Mr. President and Mr. Secretary:

The undersigned organizations, representing a wide network of non-profit and for-profit corporations, local public agencies and others that use or support the USDA rural housing programs, are writing to urge you to propose FY 2013 funding for those programs at their FY 2011 appropriated levels or higher.

The USDA housing programs serve a critical housing need in rural areas. Often providing the only decent, safe, sanitary and affordable shelter for very low- and low-income households, these programs create and preserve housing that maintains the vitality and economic stability of rural communities. Their continued support is essential.

We strongly disagreed with your effort to eliminate or drastically reduce funding for USDA housing programs in 2012. We were distressed and shocked by OMB's "Statement of Administration Policy," sent to the Senate before its consideration of H.R. 2112, because it singled out only the USDA rural housing programs, out of the entire agriculture appropriations bill, for "additional savings from terminations and reductions." We are pleased that Congress, on a bi-partisan basis, rejected those efforts when it passed H.R. 2112. We ask that you reconsider your position and maintain these programs in your FY 2013 budget.

Specifically, we urge continuation of the Sec. 502 single family direct homeownership loan program that has helped over 2 million low- and moderate-income rural families become successful homeowners. Many of these families would have sought unsustainable subprime mortgages without the 502 direct program. Moreover, the program is critical to maintaining rural jobs. Every 1,000 homes built with Sec. 502 loans create an estimated 3,000 jobs.

We recognize that you have supported and that Congress has funded the Sec. 502 guaranteed loan program at a very high level. We do not oppose that support but we also know that the guaranteed program cannot be an effective substitute for the direct loan program. The two programs simply serve very different populations that are in urgent need of affordable housing.

We urge you to propose funding of Sec. 515 rental housing at the level sought in your 2012 budget – and to include rental assistance funding at a level that can support the development of at least some new units. The preservation of the Sec. 515 rental housing stock is also extremely important. USDA's Multifamily Preservation and Revitalization (MPR) program and the Preservation Revolving Loan Fund (PRLF) are small but innovative programs that are vital to the preservation of a large portion of the 430,000 Sec. 515 units. Section 515 serves a largely elderly and disabled population with an average household income of \$11,100.

Other USDA housing programs – for example, Sec. 523 self-help, Sec. 514/516 farm labor housing, Sec. 504 repair loans and grants, Sec. 533 preservation, and the Rural Community Development Initiative – are very small but highly effective. We hope that your FY 2013 budget will also continue funding for these programs at 2011 levels.

We welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss rural housing. Thank you for considering our views.

Housing Assistance Council	Washington	DC
Alaska Community Development Corporation	Palmer	Alaska
Rural Alaska Community Action Program	Anchorage	Alaska
Community Resource Group, Inc.	Fayetteville	Arkansas
Crawford-Sebastian Community Development Council, Inc.	Fort Smith	Arkansas
Universal Housing Development Corporation	Russellville	Arkansas
West Arkansas Community Development, Inc.	Nashville	Arkansas
California Coalition for Rural Housing	Sacramento	California
California Housing Partnership Corporation	San Francisco	California
Coachella Valley Housing Coalition	Indio	California
Community Housing Improvement Program	Chico	California
Many Mansions	Thousand Oaks	California
National Housing Law Project	San Francisco	California
Northern Circle Indian Housing Authority	Ukiah	California
Peoples' Self-Help Housing	San Luis Obispo	California
Sam Jack & Associates	Indio	California
Self-Help Enterprises	Visalia	California
Susanville Indian Rancheria	Susanville	California
WNC & Associates	Irvine	California
Housing Resources of Western Colorado	Grand Junction	Colorado
Mercy Housing	Denver	Colorado
National Council of State Housing Agencies	Washington	DC
National Housing Trust	Washington	DC
National Low Income Housing Coalition	Washington	DC
Nooley Reinhardt & Associates	Washington	DC
Stewards of Affordable Housing for the Future	Washington	DC
Better Homes of Seaford, Inc.	Seaford	Delaware
Delaware Housing Coalition	Dover	Delaware
Milford Housing Development Corporation	Milford	Delaware
Millsboro Housing for Progress	Millsboro	Delaware
NCALL Research	Dover	Delaware
Arcadia DeSoto County Habitat for Humanity Inc.	Arcadia	Florida
Florida Home Partnership	Ruskin	Florida
Florida Non-Profit Housing, Inc.	Sebring	Florida
St. Johns Housing Partnership, Inc.	St. Augustine	Florida
The Churchill Companies	Clearwater	Florida
Affordable Housing Community Development Corporation	Conyers	Georgia
Early County Community Development Corporation	Blakely	Georgia
Georgia Affordable Housing Coalition	Atlanta	Georgia
Habitat for Humanity International	Americus	Georgia
Rea Ventures	Atlanta	Georgia
The Ambling Companies	Valdosta	Georgia
Self-Help Housing Corporation of Hawaii	Honolulu	Hawaii
Shoshone County Housing, Inc.	Kellogg	Idaho

Habitat for Humanity of Warrick County, Inc.	Chandler	Indiana
Pathfinder Services, Inc.	Huntington	Indiana
NEICAC	Decorah	Iowa
Harvest America Corporation	Kansas City	Kansas
Homestead Affordable Housing, Inc.	Holton	Kansas
Mid Kansas CAP Inc.	Augusta	Kansas
Appalbanc	Berea	Kentucky
Beattyville Housing and Development Corporation, Inc.	Beattyville	Kentucky
COAP, Inc.	Harlan	Kentucky
Federation of Appalachian Housing Enterprises, Inc.	Berea	Kentucky
Frontier Housing, Inc.	Morehead	Kentucky
HOMES, Inc.	Whitesburg	Kentucky
Housing Development Alliance	Hazard	Kentucky
Kentucky Highlands Community Development Corporation	London	Kentucky
Kentucky Mountain Housing Development Corporation, Inc.	Manchester	Kentucky
McCreary County Housing Development Corporation	Whitley City	Kentucky
Next Step	Louisville	Kentucky
People's Self-Help Housing, Inc.	Vanceburg	Kentucky
Southern Tier Housing	London	Kentucky
Mano en Mano   Hand in Hand	Milbridge	Maine
Rumford Group Homes, Inc.	Rumford	Maine
Enterprise Community Partners	Columbia	Maryland
Community Economic Development Assistance Corporation	Boston	Massachusetts
RCAP Solutions	Gardner	Massachusetts
E G Ministries	Prudenville	Michigan
Elim Transitional Housing	Minneapolis	Minnesota
FWJ Development & Consulting	Pequot Lakes	Minnesota
Minnesota Housing Partnership	St. Paul	Minnesota
National Housing Authority	Minneapolis	Minnesota
Three Rivers Community Action, Inc.	Zumbrota	Minnesota
Central Mississippi, Inc.	Kosciusko	Mississippi
Christian Housing Development Organization, Inc.	Columbus	Mississippi
Delta Housing Development Corporation	Indianola	Mississippi
Esther Stewart Buford Foundation	Yazoo City	Mississippi
American Federation of Government Employees Local 3354	St. Louis	Missouri
Catholic Charities of Kansas City-St. Joseph, Inc.	Kansas City	Missouri
Green Hills Community Action Agency	Trenton	Missouri
Montana Economic Development Associates	Missoula	Montana
Ely Shoshone Tribe Housing Department	Ely	Nevada
Yerington Paiute Tribal Housing Authority	Yerington	Nevada
ROC USA, LLC	Concord	New Hampshire
Native Community Finance	Laguna	New Mexico
Tierra del Sol Housing Corporation	Anthony	New Mexico
YES Housing, Inc.	Albuquerque	New Mexico

Hudson Valley Housing Development Fund Company, Inc.	Wappinger Falls	New York
LISC	New York	New York
New York State Rural Advocates	Blue Mountain Lake	New York
PathStone	Rochester	New York
Blue Springs-Hoke County Community Development Corporation	Rayford	North Carolina
Carolinas Council for Affordable Housing	New Hill	North Carolina
GEM Management, Inc.	Charlotte	North Carolina
Hinton Rural Life Center	Hayesville	North Carolina
Kearney & Company, LLC	Henderson	North Carolina
Mountain Housing Opportunities, Inc.	Asheville	North Carolina
North Carolina Community Development Initiative	Raleigh	North Carolina
Southern Properties & Development, LLC	Troy	North Carolina
SREMC, Inc.	Durham	North Carolina
Weaver Kirkland Housing LLC	Greensboro	North Carolina
Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio	Columbus	Ohio
Community Action Commission of Fayette County	Washington Ct. House	Ohio
LeadingAge Ohio	Columbus	Ohio
Ohio CDC Association	Columbus	Ohio
Ohio Poverty Law Center	Columbus	Ohio
Ohio Rural Community Assistance Program	Worthington	Ohio
Deep Fork Community Action, Inc.	Okmulgee	Oklahoma
Little Dixie Community Action Agency, Inc.	Hugo	Oklahoma
ORO Development Corporation	Oklahoma City	Oklahoma
CASA of Oregon	Newberg	Oregon
NeighborWorks Umpqua	Roseburg	Oregon
Network for Oregon Affordable Housing	Portland	Oregon
CE MH/MR Program	Ridgway	Pennsylvania
Clarion County Housing Authority	Clarion	Pennsylvania
Dickinson Center, Inc.	Ridgway	Pennsylvania
Elk County Probation Department	Ridgway	Pennsylvania
Housing Alliance of Pennsylvania	Harrisburg	Pennsylvania
Shelter Service, Inc.	Lewistown	Pennsylvania
Allendale County ALIVE	Allendale	South Carolina
Habitat for Humanity Georgetown County	Georgetown	South Carolina
Native American Community Board	Lake Andes	South Dakota
ADFAC Affordable Housing Program	Oak Ridge	Tennessee
Appalachia Service Project, Inc	Johnson City	Tennessee
Blount County Habitat for Humanity	Maryville	Tennessee
Buffalo Valley, Inc.	Hohenwald	Tennessee
City of Knoxville, TN - Community Development	Knoxville	Tennessee
Clinch-Powell Resource Conservation & Development Council, Inc.	Rutledge	Tennessee
Creative Compassion, Inc.	Crossville	Tennessee
Eastern Eight CDC	Johnson City	Tennessee

Foothills Community Development Corp.	Maryville	Tennessee
Knox Housing Partnership	Knoxville	Tennessee
Morgan Scott Project	Deer Lodge	Tennessee
Affordable Homes of South Texas, Inc.	McAllen	Texas
CDC of Brownsville	Brownsville	Texas
Housing Authority of the City of Del Rio	Del Rio	Texas
La Gloria Development Corporation	El Cenizo	Texas
Motivation Education & Training, Inc.	Austin	Texas
Neighborhood Housing Services of Dimmit County, Inc.	Carrizo Springs	Texas
Self Help Housing of East Texas	Newton	Texas
The Sullivan Companies and MJS Management, Inc.	Linden	Texas
Mountainlands Community Housing Trust	Park City	Utah
Neighborhood Nonprofit Housing Corporation	Logan	Utah
Rural Housing Development Corporation	Provo	Utah
Western Region Nonprofit Housing Corporation	Salt Lake City	Utah
Gilman Housing Trust	Lyndonville	Vermont
Lamoille Housing Partnership	Morrisville	Vermont
Vermont Housing & Conservation Board	Montpelier	Vermont
Community Housing Partners	Christiansburg	Virginia
Helping Overcome Poverty's Existence, Inc. (HOPE)	Wytheville	Virginia
Piedmont Housing Alliance	Charlottesville	Virginia
Southeast RCAP	Roanoke	Virginia
Catholic Charities Housing Services – Diocese of Yakima	Yakima	Washington
Community Frameworks	Spokane	Washington
Cornerstone Community	Leavenworth	Washington
Housing Resources Board	Bainbridge Island	Washington
Lopez Community Land Trust	Lopez Island	Washington
McLoughlin & Associates	Gig Harbor	Washington
Office of Rural and Farmworker Housing	Yakima	Washington
OPAL Community Land Trust	Eastsound	Washington
San Juan Community Home Trust	Friday Harbor	Washington
SHARE Community Land Trust	Leavenworth	Washington
Shelter Resources, Inc.	Bellevue	Washington
Upper Valley MEND	Leavenworth	Washington
Washington Farmworker Housing Trust	Olympia	Washington
Washington State Housing Finance Commission	Seattle	Washington
Whatcom Skagit Housing	Bellingham	Washington
Wood Development Group	Bellevue	Washington
Almost Heaven Habitat for Humanity	Franklin	West Virginia
HomeOwnership Center Inc.	Elkins	West Virginia
Mountain CAP of West Virginia, Inc., a CDC	Buckhannon	West Virginia
Woodlands Development Group	Elkins	West Virginia
UMOS	Milwaukee	Wisconsin
Wyoming Community Development Agency	Casper	Wyoming