

Talking Points for Meetings with Appropriations Committee Members

The House and Senate Appropriations Committees determine annual funding levels for all discretionary spending programs, including HUD programs and rural housing programs administered by the Department of Agriculture (USDA). When meeting with Appropriations Committee members, especially Transportation-HUD and Agriculture Subcommittee members, ask them to take action in the following areas:

HOME INVESTMENTS PARTNERSHIPS PROGRAM ACTION ITEM:

- ❖ Protect and restore funding for the HOME program by appropriating at least \$1.5 billion in FY 2019

Talking Points

- ✓ HOME provides states and communities with unmatched flexibility and local control to meet the housing needs that they identify as most pressing.
- ✓ Funding cuts to HOME in recent years have drastically reduced the number of affordable homes it has produced, down 60 percent since FY 2010.
- ✓ Congress' decision in 2018 to increase HOME funding to \$1.362 billion was a significant step in the right direction but even with the funding increase provided in the FY 2018 omnibus, its funding level is still 25 percent less than in FY 2010.

RENTAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS ACTION ITEMS:

- ❖ Provide enough funding to renew expiring contracts for a full year.
- ❖ Fund all authorized vouchers.
- ❖ Fund as many new vouchers as possible to help families still waiting.
- ❖ Ensure that successful HFA project-based contract and voucher administrators continue in and are adequately compensated for these critical roles.
- ❖ Simplify the voucher program to help states and localities assist more families with the funds they have and help families achieve self-sufficiency.

Talking Points

- ✓ Project-based Section 8 and vouchers provide an indispensable housing safety net to some of our state's lowest income families.
- ✓ Many more families are eligible for assistance than receive it.
- ✓ Rental assistance makes Housing Bond, Housing Credit, HOME, and other rental housing affordable to some of our lowest-income families.

RURAL HOUSING PROGRAMS ACTION ITEMS:

- ❖ Provide full and adequate funding for USDA's single-family and multifamily housing programs.
- ❖ Preserve USDA-assisted housing at risk of losing such assistance as their mortgages mature and are paid off and protect tenants affected by maturing mortgages.

Talking Points

- ✓ Rural housing programs make housing affordable for families that would not otherwise be able to afford it, in areas where affordable housing is scarce.
- ✓ Funding for these programs is important to meeting the rural housing needs in our state.

HOUSING TRUST FUND ACTION ITEM:

- ❖ Preserve a dedicated stream of funding for the Housing Trust Fund.

Talking Points

- ✓ The Housing Trust Fund was authorized in the Housing and Economic Recovery Act of 2008 to provide needed funding to increase the availability of affordable housing for very and extremely low-income families, who have the most critical housing needs.
- ✓ The Federal Housing Finance Agency (FHFA) lifted the suspension on Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac payments to the Housing Trust Fund, and States are allocating their second HTF grants this year.
- ✓ Congress should preserve a dedicated funding stream for the Housing Trust Fund to ensure this money is available to state administrators providing affordable housing to very and extremely low-income families.
- ✓ Congress should prevent legislative efforts to transfer HTF funds to another program or prevent GSE contributions to HTF.
- ✓ Congress should also work to provide maximum flexibility for program administrators and limit federal regulations.