



December 4, 2020

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Majority Leader McConnell, Republican Leader McCarthy, Democratic Leader Schumer, Chairwoman Lowey, Chairman Price, Ranking Member Granger, Ranking Member Diaz-Balart, Chairman Shelby, Chairwoman Collins, Ranking Member Leahy, and Ranking Member Reed:

Thank you for the nearly \$3 billion for public housing, housing choice vouchers, and project based rental assistance under the CARES Act. The CARES Act provided the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (“HUD”) with statutory and regulatory waiver authority which has been enormously helpful to housing authorities. These emergency resources have allowed public housing authorities to operate under these extraordinary circumstances, but the funding provided was not enough to cover their needs for the full duration of this crisis. More resources are needed, and we urge you to include HUD funding in the next COVID-19 relief package.

The HEROES Act contains important provisions that the industry groups urge Congressional leadership to support. The bill provides \$2.5 billion in additional voucher assistance funds to cover shortfalls, \$500 million in voucher administrative fees, \$2 billion in public housing operating funds, and \$750 million for the Project-Based Rental Assistance program. The HEALS Act contains a critical provision protecting public housing authorities from certain liabilities as a result of the pandemic. Additionally, the industry groups support added funding for single-use housing voucher assistance with a sunset provision for families requiring emergency short-term rental assistance. The industry groups urge Congress to support these measures as well.

The Novel Coronavirus COVID-19 poses a major threat to public housing communities which house vulnerable at-risk populations. PHAs have experienced significant disinvestment over the last several decades and are now redeploying limited operating funds to cover emergency expenses. While not included in HEROES or HEALS, it is critical that emergency funding and longer-term preservation resources for public housing are included in the next package.

It is still unknown what the full duration of the disruption to jobs and our economy will be and how long vaccine distribution will take. To enable housing authorities to properly care for their residents and staff while maintaining their mission of providing safe and affordable housing, Congress and HUD must provide substantial resources and flexibilities to housing authorities as quickly as possible. These resources will allow public housing authorities to continue to operate during the pandemic, recover from the COVID-19 crisis, and preserve their portfolios for years to come. Thank you for your attention to the millions of Americans who call public housing home.

Sincerely,

National Association of Housing and Redevelopment
Officials (NAHRO)

Council of Large Public Housing Authorities (CLPHA)

Public Housing Authorities Directors Association
(PHADA)

Moving to Work (MTW) Collaborative