



NATIONAL COALITION **FOR** HOUSING JUSTICE

National Coalition for Housing Justice Calls on Congress to Enact Historic Housing Investments in Build Back Better Act

Washington, D.C. – The National Coalition for Housing Justice (NCHJ) calls on Congress to not turn its back on housing in the Build Back Better Act. Any spending cuts to the overall size of the economic recovery package must not come at the expense of proven solutions to America’s housing and homelessness crisis. Rental assistance, public housing, and the Housing Trust Fund are three essential programs that serve America’s lowest-income and most marginalized households who face the greatest, clearest needs. These programs must be funded at the historic levels approved by the House Financial Services Committee.

Already, there is enormous pressure on Congress to divert resources away from housing for those with the greatest needs. But, let’s be clear: these harmful efforts will do nothing to address the underlying causes of the housing crisis and will exacerbate racial inequities.

Nearly the entire shortage of affordable housing supply is concentrated among households with extremely low incomes. Nationally, there is a shortage of 7 million homes affordable and available to the lowest-income renters. For every 10 of the lowest-income renter households, there are fewer than 4 homes affordable and available to them. There is not a single state or congressional district in the country with enough affordable homes to meet this demand.

Without affordable housing options, more than 10 million renter households are severely cost-burdened, paying more than half of their incomes on rent; 3 out of 4 of them have extremely low incomes. They include more than 1 million people, many with disabilities, who are in a perpetual state of crisis – either experiencing homeless or living in overcrowded institutions or in emergency service settings. America’s housing crisis disproportionately impacts Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC), who are more likely than white households to have extremely low incomes, pay more than half of their income on rent, or experience homelessness.

There are proven solutions that can address this crisis, but Congress has not invested in them at the scale necessary. The Build Back Better Act can fix that—but only if investments are targeted to where they are needed most.

For this reason, the National Coalition for Housing Justice urges Congress to enact historic investments in the country’s affordable housing infrastructure, including \$90 billion to expand rental assistance to 1 million more households, \$80 billion to preserve public housing for more than 2.5 million residents, and \$37 billion for the national Housing Trust Fund to build, preserve and rehabilitate 330,000 apartments affordable to the lowest-income people.

"We are at a crucial moment in history in our collective work to end homelessness. Through the Build Back Better Act, Congress can and must equip communities with the support they need to measurably and equitably solve homelessness." - Rosanne Haggerty, president of **Community Solutions**.

"More than a million people and families can't pursue their dreams because they're just trying to survive as they are shuffled between shelters, nursing homes, group homes, jails, and foster care. Congress has a rare opportunity to change the math for them and to build stronger, more equitable communities. It's the right thing to do, it's the smart thing to do, and it's within reach." – Deborah DeSantis, president and CEO, **Corporation for Supportive Housing**.

"As the nation's largest funder, the federal government has the opportunity to show its commitment to ending homelessness and housing instability, particularly for Black, Indigenous, and other people of color, through these unprecedented investments. Because philanthropy's resources alone cannot end homelessness, these historic levels of funding, coupled with private dollars through authentic public-private partnerships, create the conditions for transformative change towards housing justice. This is the moment for Congress to do right by those who are most impacted by the housing and homelessness crisis and set the country on a path to ensure everyone has a safe and affordable place to call home." - Amanda Andere, CEO, **Funders Together to End Homelessness**.

"After decades of underinvestment, the nation is on the cusp of being able to end homelessness and housing insecurity for more people than ever before," said Nan Roman, President and CEO of the **National Alliance to End Homelessness**. "The Alliance calls on Congressional leadership to commit to keeping a robust investment in desperately needed affordable housing resources in the Build Back Better Act. This is an opportunity to create a more just and equitable nation. Our leaders must not fail to meet this moment."

"This legislation will provide \$90 billion for rental assistance and housing choice vouchers, creating an opportunity to lift up over 254,000 veterans and many others. Congress must ensure a robust commitment to affordable housing resources remains in this legislation through passage, in order to Build Back Better." - Kathryn Monet, CEO, **National Coalition for Homeless Veterans**

"Housing is health care. We cannot improve health care outcomes if those we serve do not have permanent, stable housing. The housing investments included in the Build Back Better campaign are vitally important to meeting basic human needs, and also will reduce the racial inequities that have long-existed in both our housing policies and health care systems." - Bobby Watts, CEO, **National Health Care for the Homeless Council**

"The housing provisions of the reconciliation bill were only a down payment on President Biden's commitment to ensure safe, decent, affordable housing is a human right for every American. Mass homelessness, disparately impacting Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color, is the predictable result of the housing policies of the past 40 years. If this country is to Build Back Better, it cannot miss this opportunity to start with targeted investments directed toward repairing our broken social housing infrastructure and helping those already on the streets." - Antonia Fasanelli, executive director of the **National Homelessness Law Center**.

"There has never been a moment where there were such transformative investments on the table and the real potential to achieve them. The Build Back Better Act is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to effectively end homelessness—if done right. Congress cannot allow this opportunity to pass us by." - Diane Yentel, president and CEO of the **National Low Income Housing Coalition**.

"Through the Build Back Better Act, Congress has an opportunity to take a historic step toward ending homelessness. Everyone deserves a safe place to call home, yet LGBTQ youth are 120% more

likely to experience homelessness than their straight and cisgender peers – with Black, Brown, and Indigenous and transgender youth especially impacted. True Colors United urges Congress to make this historic investment in housing justice – and to lead with equity by centering young people and those most impacted.” - Gregory Lewis, Executive Director & CEO, **True Colors United**

“Prior to the pandemic, nearly 4.2 million young people, including 700,000 children ages 13-17, experienced unaccompanied homelessness in any given year. Congress has an opportunity to pass a transformational expansion of rental and housing assistance and meaningfully change the course of the homelessness and affordable housing crisis in the United States. \$90 billion in rental assistance would protect 660,000 children under age 18. Youth Collaboratory respectfully urges Congress to embrace this historic opportunity to invest in the future of our nation’s young people.” - Megan Blondin, Executive Director, **Youth Collaboratory**

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The [National Coalition for Housing Justice](#) (NCHJ) is a group of national organizations that have aligned behind seeking housing justice in order to end homelessness. Our vision of housing justice realizes the right for everyone in our country to have affordable, safe, accessible, and stable housing. We take an approach grounded in racial justice, economic justice, and equity for all who have been marginalized or minoritized.