



We help build homes and communities across rural America.

Chairman Sherrod Brown
Senate Committee on Banking,
Housing, and Urban Affairs
United States Senate
503 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Chairwoman Debbie Stabenow
Senate Committee on Agriculture,
Nutrition, & Forestry
United States Senate
731 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Ranking Member Tim Scott
Senate Committee on Banking,
Housing, and Urban Affairs
United States Senate
104 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Ranking Member John Boozman
Senate Committee on Agriculture,
Nutrition, & Forestry
United States Senate
141 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

June 29, 2023

Dear Chairman Brown, Ranking Member Scott, Chairwoman Stabenow, & Ranking Member Boozman,

The 111 undersigned affordable housing and community development organizations and partners write to urge the Senate Banking and Agriculture Committees to work together to ensure that bipartisan, commonsense improvements to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Rural Housing Service (RHS) programs are considered for inclusion in the 2023 Farm Bill.

The RHS administers a suite of housing and community development programs targeted specifically to residents of rural places. These programs span the spectrum from multifamily rental to single-family homeownership to capacity building, and are authorized under Title V of the Housing Act of 1949. These programs are under the authorizing jurisdiction of the Senate Banking Committee, but the appropriations jurisdiction of the Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee. Despite being administered by USDA's Rural Development arm, the RHS programs have not historically been addressed in the Rural Development Title of the Farm Bill because of this jurisdictional landscape, but the time is ripe for bipartisan, cross-Committee collaboration on this topic.

Millions of rural families have benefitted from the RHS programs. The RHS programs support single-family and multifamily housing through grants, direct loans, and loan

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guarantees. Multifamily programs at RHS include loans to develop or rehabilitate rental housing, loans and grants to finance housing for farm laborers, and rental assistance to assist tenants in those homes. The single-family programs include loans and guarantees to purchase homes, loans and grants to repair homes, and grants to support self-help housing programs (programs where families invest their own labor – called “sweat equity” – in the construction of their home). Additionally, programs exist within RHS to help build the capacity of rural communities through targeted technical assistance, and to develop or improve essential community facilities.

These programs are incredible resources for small towns and rural communities, but are in need of modernization and streamlining to function more effectively in the contemporary rural context. There are a variety of tested, commonsense improvements to the RHS programs that have been discussed and agreed upon in a bipartisan fashion in Congress, and the 2023 Farm Bill is an opportunity to bring those improvements across the finish line.

Thank you for your time and consideration. This stakeholder community stands ready to help in any way we can to ensure that both Committees have everything you need to give the RHS programs an opportunity to be improved in the 2023 Farm Bill.

Sincerely,

Housing Assistance Council

A DIAMOND CARE

ADULTS & YOUTH UNITED DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION, INC. (A.Y.U.D.A., INC.)

Alaska Community Development Corporation

Alexandria Development LLC

Appalachian Community Capital

ARCH Community Health Coalition

Aspen Institute Community Strategies Group

B D T Housing Services

Blackbelt & Central Alabama Housing Authority

Bonneville Multifamily Capital

BWE (Bellwether Enterprise)

Caroline County Habitat for Humanity



CASA of Oregon
cdc | come dream. come build.
Central Minnesota Housing Partnership, Inc.
Churchill Stateside Group
City of Coffeyville
Coachella Valley Housing Coalition
Coastal Enterprises, Inc.
Collaborating Voices Foundation
Communities Unlimited, Inc.
Community Action Commission of Fayette County
Community Solutions
Council for Affordable and Rural Housing
Council of State Community Development Agencies
Covenant Faith Outreach Ministries / Covenant CDC
Damascus Outreach Association Inc.
Dothan Housing Authority
Downing Community Advisors
Ecumenical Housing Development Group
Enterprise Community Partners
Epicenter
Family Resources of New Orleans
Farmworker Housing Dev. Corporation
First Midwest Bank
Florida Home Partnership, Inc.
Florida Non Profit Housing
Foothills Community Development Corporation
Frontier Housing
Get RD Done Right!



Great Lakes ADA of Michigan
Greater Minnesota Housing Fund
Greystone Affordable Development
Guadalupe Economic Services Corporation
Habitat for Humanity International
Habitat for Humanity Seattle-King & Kittitas Counties
Homeless and Housing Coalition of Kentucky
Homeownership Alliance
Homestead Affordable Housing
Homestead Community Development
Housing America Corporation
Inner Voice
International Economic Development Council
LeadingAge
Local Initiatives Support Corporation
McLoughlin & Assisted LLC
Merchants Capital
MHP (Minnesota Housing Partnership)
Midwest Minnesota Community Development Corporation
Minnesota Housing
National Affordable Housing Management Association
National Alliance to End Homelessness
National Association of Affordable Housing Lenders
National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (NAHRO)
National Association of Local Housing Finance Agencies
National Center for Healthy Housing
National Community Stabilization Trust
National Council of Farmer Cooperatives



National Council of State Housing Agencies
National Disability Rights Network (NDRN)
National Housing Conference
National Housing Law Project
National Leased Housing Association
National Low Income Housing Coalition
National NeighborWorks Association
NeighborGood Partners
Network For Oregon Affordable Housing
NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice
Office of Rural and Farmworker Housing
Ohio Domestic Violence Network
Omaha Tribe Big Elk Community Development Corporation
Opportunity Finance Network
Our Just Future
Oweesta Corporation
Partners for Rural Transformation
PCH Group, LLC
POSE CDC, INC.
Proyecto Azteca
Rose Community Capital
Rural Housing Services (RHS)
Rural Multifamily Lenders Council
Self-Help Enterprises
Self-Help Housing Corporation of Hawaii
Soldiers Realigned
South Dakota Native Homeownership Coalition
Southside Outreach Group, Inc.



Southwest GA United
Tennessee's Community Assistance Corporation
The First Community Christian Pentecostal Church of God Inc
The Genesis Fund
The Housing Assistance Corporation
The National Coalition for Homeless Veterans
Tierra del Sol Housing Corporation
Tribal Homeownership Coalition of the Southwest
Under Gods Care Inc
Ven Studio, LLC
Walker Montgomery C.D.C.
Willene Agency
Wisconsin Community Action Program Association (WISCAP)
Wisconsin Council for Affordable & Rural Housing



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