

May 22, 2008

The Honorable Patty Murray  
Chair  
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Transportation, Housing & Urban Development  
And Related Agencies  
133 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Christopher Bond  
Ranking Member  
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Transportation, Housing & Urban Development  
And Related Agencies  
128 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable John Olver  
Chairman  
House Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Transportation, Housing & Urban Development  
And Related Agencies  
2358 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Joseph Knollenberg  
Ranking Member  
House Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Transportation, Housing & Urban Development  
And Related Agencies  
1016 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Transportation – HUD Appropriations Subcommittee Leaders:

We, the undersigned, are national trade associations which represent owners and management agents participating in federal affordable multifamily and public housing programs. We are respectfully requesting \$1 million in FY 09 appropriations for the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to translate vital documents and make available interpretation services to assist persons with limited English proficiency.

In the FY 08 Consolidated Appropriations Act (P.L. 110-161), Congress wisely provided \$380,000 “for the creation and promotion of translated materials and other programs that support the assistance of persons with limited English proficiency in utilizing the services provided by the Department of Housing and Urban Development.” This initial funding provided positive first steps toward helping persons with limited English proficiency understand HUD’s programs and helping to alleviate affordable housing providers’ costs of complying with the obligations to provide translations and language services, pursuant to HUD’s final limited English proficiency guidance. Unfortunately, HUD is using a portion of these appropriations to complete work on translations which the Department committed to provide more than three years ago. Additional funding will be necessary to serve more language groups, and to translate more documents.

To its credit, HUD’s Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity has expressed interest in providing more translated documents in additional languages, and even a toll-free interpretation hotline, subject to the availability of appropriations. We believe a \$1 million appropriation in FY 09 would go a long way toward furthering the partnership among HUD, the affordable multifamily housing industry and civil rights stakeholders to ensure persons with limited English proficiency have meaningful access to HUD’s programs.

Thank you for considering this request. Please feel free to direct any questions or concerns to Michelle Kitchen, of the National Affordable Housing Management Association at 703-683-8630 x11.

Sincerely,

American Association of Homes and Services for the Aging  
Council of Large Public Housing Authorities  
Institute of Real Estate Management  
National Affordable Housing Management Association  
National Apartment Association  
National Association of Home Builders  
National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials  
National Leased Housing Association  
National Multi Housing Council