

Dear Senator:

The undersigned groups are writing you to support provisions in the VA-HUD appropriations bill that will ensure adequate funding for the Section 8 voucher program. We understand action may occur as early as the week of November 15 and urge Congress to adopt language that will protect all current voucher recipients and encourage continued utilization within an agency's authorized level.

We urge the conference committee to retain the Senate bill provisions that would provide \$13.9 billion in voucher funding and instruct the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to adjust funding based on changes in local rents, utility costs, or family incomes and replenish program reserves when necessary to avoid any displacement of families. We are supportive of this language and stronger language that would help to avoid the dilemma that occurred in April of 2004 when HUD interpreted the FY 2004 VA-HUD Congressional language in a manner that resulted in funding shortfalls not envisioned by the Congress.

Further, HUD's April interpretation and ambiguity resulting from the appropriations process raise concern in the private sector about the ability to rely on Section 8 voucher funding. Not only will this dampen landlord and lender enthusiasm to participate in the program, but will worsen an existing concern about appropriations risk in the lending community.

We urge the Congress to continue the Section 8 voucher program in a manner that supports the original intent of the law, allows landlords to rely on the program and allows the lenders to have confidence that the government will honor its commitments.

Sincerely,

Affordable Housing Tax Credit Coalition
American Association of Homes and Services for the Aging
Council for Affordable and Rural Housing
Institute of Real Estate Management
Institute for Responsible Housing Preservation
National Affordable Housing Management Association
National Apartment Association
National Association of Affordable Housing Lenders
National Leased Housing Association
National Housing Trust
National Low Income Housing Coalition
National Multi Housing Council

cc: Senator Richard Shelby
Senator Kit Bond
Representative Barney Frank
Senator Jack Reed
Representative Jim Walsh
Senator Paul Sarbanes
Representative Mike Oxley
Representative Bob Ney