

United States House of Representatives
Committee on Financial Services
 Washington, D.C. 20515

March 19, 2018

The Honorable Rodney Frelinghuysen
 Chairman
 U.S. House of Representatives
 Committee on Appropriations
 H-305, The Capitol
 Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Nita Lowey
 Ranking Member
 U.S. House of Representatives
 Committee on Appropriations
 1016 Longworth House Office Building
 Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mario Diaz-Balart
 Chairman
 U.S. House of Representatives
 Committee on Appropriations
 Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing
 and Urban Development, and Related Agencies

The Honorable David Price
 Ranking Member
 U.S. House of Representatives
 Committee on Appropriations
 Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and
 Urban Development, and Related Agencies

Dear Chairman Frelinghuysen, Ranking Member Lowey, Chairman Díaz-Balart, and Ranking Member Price:

As you consider the fiscal year (FY) 2019 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies (THUD) appropriations bill, we urge you to make addressing homelessness a top priority. Homelessness has reached crisis proportions in some parts of the country, and we cannot expect to make any significant progress towards our nation's goals for ending homelessness without substantial new funding. For this reason, I respectfully request that you fully fund the Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD's) McKinney Vento Homeless Assistance Grants in FY19, and that you also appropriate an additional \$5 billion to McKinney Vento, designated as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 as amended. By providing this additional emergency relief funding, we can provide a surge of new resources to those communities and people who so desperately need it.

With the passage of the HEARTH Act in 2009, Congress charged the Administration with creating a National Strategic Plan to End Homelessness. In compliance with this provision, the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) put forth the Opening Doors strategy in 2010 – the nation's first comprehensive federal strategy to prevent and end homelessness in America. Since the inception of this strategy, our country has made some progress towards the measurable goals that Opening Doors established for ending homelessness in America. This progress is directly attributable to the multi-agency coordination and priority-setting under Opening Doors, as well as new funding targeted for homeless veterans. However, progress has been uneven across the country, across sub-populations, and has virtually stalled in the absence of new funding. In fact, according to the 2017 Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress, homelessness increased for the first time in seven years, with over 553,000 people experiencing homelessness in the United States on a single night in January 2017.

In the richest country in the world, it is simply unconscionable that this many of our neighbors across the country are living without a place to call home. Several communities have experienced such serious increases in their homeless populations that they have gone so far as to declare that homelessness has reached a state of emergency. The federal government must recognize the crisis at hand and support these communities in their efforts to aid the homeless.

It is clear that we will not make any significant progress towards ending homelessness in this country if Congress is not willing to provide the funding that is necessary to achieve that goal. That is why I respectfully request that you fully fund HUD's McKinney Vento Homeless Assistance Grants, and further provide \$5 billion in emergency

funding in FY 2019, pursuant to the authority under section 251(b)(2)(A) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 as amended.

Thank you for your consideration of this important request. If you have any questions about this letter, please contact Theresa Dumais with Ranking Member Waters at Theresa.Dumais@mail.house.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Maxine Waters". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath it.

MAXINE WATERS
Ranking Member
Committee on Financial Services