



January 10, 2024

The Honorable Mike Johnson
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
568 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
2433 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Room S-221, The Capital
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Room S-230, The Capital
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Speaker Johnson, Leader Jeffries, Leader Schumer, and Leader McConnell:

The undersigned national associations represent for-profit and non-profit owners, operators, developers, property managers, housing agencies, and advocacy organizations involved in the provision and promotion of housing, both affordable and conventional. As you continue negotiations on government funding, we urge Congress to expeditiously finish the FY24 appropriations process, to avoid a scenario where mandatory sequestration is triggered. Funding for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) housing programs is vital as is extending the authority of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). Furthermore, we also urge that Congress include the Respect State Housing Laws Act, H.R. 802, as part of this package. Approving this measure would end lingering operational challenges related to the federal “notice to vacate” requirement included in the 2020 Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act.

Here are just a few of the specific programs that are impacted by government funding. We recommend Congress take the following actions:

Fully Fund Federal Housing Support & Affordability Programs – Our industry continues to advocate for funding for multiple critical programs that focus on housing affordability, such as the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program (HCV), Project Based Rental Assistance (PBRA), Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD), Homelessness Programs, HOME, Community Development Block Grants (CDGB) and Rural Housing programs.

- Provide Funds to Fully Renew Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers – The HCV program serves 2.4 million households, fully renewing funding ensures program payments, timely physical inspections, and income verifications which could be delayed preventing tenants from securing and moving into the housing they need.

Extend Authority for the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) – The National Association of REALTORS® estimates that an extended lapse of the NFIP authority could threaten 1,300 property sales each day. Furthermore, the impact is just as significant in the commercial and multifamily space, particularly for smaller, more affordable properties.

- Residential, commercial, and rental property owners currently insured by NFIP would be unable to renew their policies or purchase new ones, which is required when utilizing any federally backed mortgage product.
- Without access to the NFIP, property owners of all kinds, including millions of American families, would be forced to rely on private market flood insurance products or limited federal disaster aid.

Include The Respect State Housing Laws Act in the Package – The CARES Act established a temporary 120-day moratorium on evictions due to nonpayment of rent, applicable to federally backed and federally-assisted housing. This section of the CARES Act also instituted what should have been a temporary notice procedure, requiring housing providers to notify covered residents 30 days before filing for eviction after the moratorium ended on July 24, 2020.

- Throughout the pandemic, rental housing professionals worked to both help residents resolve their hardships and to advance policies to provide renters with essential resources to meet their housing needs. Now that Congress and the President have terminated the federal COVID-19 public health emergency, we urge Congress to end the CARES Act 30-day notice-to-vacate by supporting H.R. 802, the Respect State Housing Laws Act, returning eviction policies back to the state and local level.

Simply approving a Continuing Resolution or allowing a government shutdown to occur will worsen our nation's housing affordability crisis. Moreover, either of these scenarios would force property owners and managers to make contingency plans for paying mortgages, finding flood insurance, and continuing operations if funding is not available to renew the contracts or make housing assistance payments. Uncertainty about funding further exacerbates the pressure on the market by raising concerns about the reliability of federal funding commitments among owners, managers, lenders, and residents.

We respectfully urge Congress to expeditiously finish the FY24 appropriations process and approve funding for HUD and USDA housing programs at spending levels which enable property owners, both for-profit and not-for-profit, to properly administer the programs for our residents. As well, Congress should also extend the authority for the NFIP and pass the Respect State Housing Laws Act as part of this appropriations package.

Sincerely,

Council for Affordable and Rural Housing
Institute of Real Estate Management
Manufactured Housing Institute
National Affordable Housing Management
Association

National Apartment Association
National Association of Home Builders
National Association of REALTORS®
National Leased Housing Association
National Multifamily Housing Council