

February 1, 2016

United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative:

The undersigned organizations, which include a broad cross-section of stakeholders in the housing affordability realm, urge House passage of “The Housing Opportunities through Modernization Act” (H.R. 3700), without addition of divisive measures that would undermine the broad consensus behind these commonsense reforms. Our nation faces tremendous housing needs. This legislation is an important step forward to address a number of important items which have enjoyed broad consensus over the years. There is more to be done to address housing and community development needs, but H.R. 3700 represents solid progress in the right direction. If enacted, this bipartisan bill would build on the effectiveness of federal rental assistance while achieving some modest savings.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s rental assistance programs face difficult budget pressures, and this reform legislation would help state and local agencies stretch limited funds and minimize the risk of harsh cuts in assistance to needy families. These reforms ease administrative burdens for housing agencies and owners, while delivering fairer and more efficient assistance to low-income families. In addition, the bill provides new tools to preserve affordable housing, reduce homelessness, increase self-sufficiency and expand access to areas of greater opportunity.

Importantly, H.R. 3700 would make these improvements while leaving in place the core characteristics that have helped make federal rental assistance programs effective. The bill’s rental assistance provisions, taken together, also avoid any cost increase, and could modestly reduce the cost of providing the current level of assistance.

Congress has vetted most of the bill’s provisions for nearly a decade as part of earlier proposals that have had broad support in Congress and among stakeholders, but never became law. We urge the House to move promptly this week to adopt H.R. 3700 and we stand ready to work with members of Congress.

Center on Budget and Policy Priorities	National Apartment Association
Consortium for Citizens With Disabilities Housing Task Force	National Association of Home Builders
Council of Large Public Housing Authorities	National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (NAHRO)
CSH (Corporation for Supportive Housing)	National Association of REALTORS®
Enterprise Community Partners	National Council of State Housing Agencies
Housing Partnership Network	National Housing Law Project
LeadingAge	National Leased Housing Association
Low Income Investment Fund (LIIF)	National Low Income Housing Coalition
National Affordable Housing Management Association	National Multifamily Housing Council
National Alliance on Mental Illness	Technical Assistance Collaborative
National Alliance to End Homelessness	The Institute of Real Estate Management