

October 20, 2021

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker of the House  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Chuck Schumer  
Majority Leader  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
Minority Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Minority Leader  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Maxine Waters  
Chair, Financial Services Committee  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Sherrod Brown  
Chair, Banking Committee  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Minority Leader McCarthy, Majority Leader Schumer, Minority Leader McConnell, Chair Waters, and Chair Brown:

We, the undersigned organizations, are writing to strongly encourage you to include robust funding for housing provisions in the Build Back Better Act. More than ever, we need your leadership to enact bold policies to ensure that people with the lowest incomes and the most marginalized people have access to stable, affordable housing to ensure economic stability for all families.

The United States has been facing an affordable housing crisis even prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. Almost [half of renters and over one quarter of homeowners](#) are housing cost-burdened, meaning they spend 30% or more of their household income on housing expenses. Black and Latinx households, who have long faced inequitable access to housing opportunities due to discriminatory policies, are even [likelier than their White counterparts](#) to be cost-burdened.

The pandemic has only revealed and further exacerbated these inequities. Millions of households, particularly households of color and those with low incomes, are behind on their housing payments and are at risk of eviction or foreclosure. The lowest-income renters have been the most severely impacted by the pandemic, with [29% of Black renters and 21% of Latinx renters](#) having fallen behind on rent payments,

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compared to only 11% of White renters. Meanwhile, soaring home prices have made homeownership unattainable for many vulnerable households.

**Given the long-standing housing crisis and the aftermath of the pandemic, there is a critical need for federal investment in affordable housing.** We encourage you to include the following provisions at robust funding levels in the budget reconciliation package:

- Provide downpayment assistance and housing counseling to first-generation homebuyers, who are disproportionately people of color, to ensure wealth creation for future generations
- Increase the affordable housing supply through programs like HOME Investment Partnership Program and the Housing Trust Fund
- Provide rental assistance for low-income households
- Direct flexible resources to community development financial institutions (CDFIs), which can finance affordable housing solutions and revitalize communities.

Access to affordable housing is essential. Even beyond fulfilling the basic need for shelter, [housing impacts families' financial security and can be a key tool for wealth creation](#). Particularly for households of color, who have historically been excluded from housing opportunities, homeownership can contribute to generational wealth-building.

This key investment in housing is not only critical to remedying the nation's housing crisis, it has the opportunity to make positive impacts on racial equity, economic mobility, reducing poverty, and public health. It can address the housing shortage, support the millions of households who are behind on rent payments and put families on the path to homeownership. Moreover, this investment can help [create jobs and generate revenue for state and local governments](#), thereby supporting the economy as we emerge from the pandemic.

We, the undersigned organizations, are writing to strongly encourage you to include robust funding for housing provisions in the Build Back Better Act.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Prosperity Now

Americans for Financial Reform  
Center for Responsible Lending  
Enterprise Community Partners  
National Community Reinvestment Coalition (NCRC)

Alabama

NAACP Economic Programs  
United Way of Southwest Alabama

California

Change Machine

Florida

Sant La, Haitian Neighborhood Center, Inc.

Georgia

Family Within Us Inc.  
Step Up Savannah

Illinois

Woodstock Institute

Louisiana

Family Resources of New Orleans  
United Way of Southeast Louisiana

Massachusetts

The Midas Collaborative

Minnesota

Build Wealth Minnesota  
MICAH- Metropolitan Interfaith Council on Affordable Housing  
Midwest Minnesota Community Development Corporation  
Money for Two Workshops, LLC

New Jersey

Manufactured Homeowners of America- NJ Chapter  
New Jersey Institute for Social Justice

New York

Consumer Credit Counseling Service of Buffalo, Inc  
NextGen Chamber of Commerce  
United Way of Westchester and Putnam

Oklahoma

Honorable Al-Bey J.L. Esq. & Affiliates, LLC.

Oregon

ACCESS

Arbor Mobile Home Park of Oregon

CASA of Oregon

Pennsylvania

National Housing Resource Center

Pennsylvania Council of Churches

Washington

National Manufactured Home Owners Association

Rooted in Vibrant Communities (RVC) Seattle