

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 22, 2021

The Honorable Brian Schatz  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing,  
and Urban Development, and Related  
Agencies  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Susan Collins  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing,  
and Urban Development, and Related  
Agencies  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Schatz and Ranking Member Collins:

As the Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development, and Related Agencies (THUD) Subcommittee finalizes its Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 appropriations bill, we encourage you to support those who have defended our freedom by funding the Department of Housing and Urban Development's Veterans Affairs and Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) program at or above the FY 2021 enacted level.

HUD-VASH combines HUD's Housing Choice Voucher rental assistance program for low-income renters with case management and clinical services for veterans provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). The program targets chronically homeless veterans who often have severe mental and physical health problems, and/or substance use disorders. Frequent emergency room visits, multiple treatment attempts, and limited access to social supports increase the barriers for homeless veterans to obtaining permanent, stable housing. Among the VA's homeless assistance programs, HUD-VASH enrolls the largest number and largest percentage of veterans who have experienced long-term or repeated homelessness.

Because of its focus on chronic homelessness, the HUD-VASH program has been highly successful in helping our nation's veterans escape homelessness, combining housing assistance and supportive services into one resource. Since 2008, HUD has awarded over 100,000 HUD-VASH vouchers through public housing agencies across the country. According to HUD's 2020 Annual Homeless Assessment Report, the number of veterans experiencing homelessness has decreased by nearly 50% since 2010. Still, chronic homelessness among veterans persists. While more than 75,000 veterans are currently in permanent housing through HUD-VASH, HUD's annual report found that about 37,000 veterans experienced homelessness on a single night in 2020.

When Congress reduced HUD-VASH funding in FY 2017 from \$60 million to \$40 million, the level at which it remains today, the number of HUD-VASH vouchers issued dropped from about 8,000 to 5,000. HUD VASH funding must remain level, if not increased, to achieve the goal of ending homelessness among veterans. HUD-VASH vouchers ensure that women and men in uniform who have sacrificed so much for our country have a stable place to call home and the supportive services they need to heal and rebuild their lives.

We urge you to fund HUD-VASH at or above the FY 2021 levels. With steady or additional funding, public housing authorities can maximize the number of families served, and HUD-VASH case managers will have the tools to comprehensively address the needs of homeless veterans in America.

Sincerely,



Jacky Rosen  
United States Senator



Kevin Cramer  
United States Senator



Christopher S. Murphy  
United States Senator



Chris Van Hollen  
United States Senator



Kirsten Gillibrand  
United States Senator



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Mazie K. Hirono  
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Amy Klobuchar  
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Jeanne Shaheen  
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Richard Blumenthal  
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Tina Smith  
United States Senator



Elizabeth Warren  
United States Senator



Tammy Baldwin  
United States Senator



Cory A. Booker  
United States Senator



Catherine Cortez Masto  
United States Senator



Jack Reed  
United States Senator



Joe Manchin III  
United States Senator



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Gary Peters  
United States Senator



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Dianne Feinstein  
United States Senator



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Alex Padilla  
United States Senator



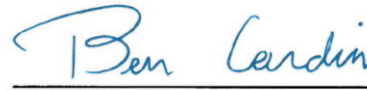
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Bernard Sanders  
United States Senator



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Mark R. Warner  
United States Senator



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Benjamin L. Cardin  
United States Senator



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Tammy Duckworth  
United States Senator



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Ron Wyden  
United States Senator



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Richard J. Durbin  
United States Senator



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Jeffrey A. Merkley  
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Sherrod Brown

Sherrod Brown  
United States Senator