

United States Senate

April 6, 2023

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 Cindy Hyde-Smith
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 Hyde-Smith:

As the Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development, and Related Agencies (THUD) Subcommittee finalizes its Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 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 2023 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 2022 Annual Homeless Assessment Report, from 2020 to 2022, the number of veterans experiencing sheltered homelessness decreased by 11 percent. 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 19,565 veterans experienced sheltered homelessness on a single night in 2022. Encouragingly, unsheltered homelessness among veterans decreased by nearly 11 percent between the 2020 and 2022 point-in-time-count, largely thanks to a robust federal response that expanded resources to vulnerable individuals.

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. That is why HUD-VASH funding must be increased, or at least remain level, to achieve the goal of ending homelessness among veterans.

We urge you to fund HUD-VASH at or above the FY 2023 enacted level. 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.

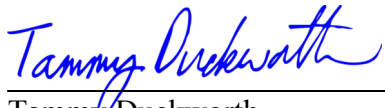
Sincerely,



Jacky Rosen
United States Senator



Mazie K. Hirono
United States Senator



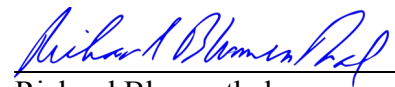
Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator



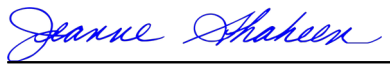
Raphael Warnock
United States Senator



Joe Manchin III
United States Senator



Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



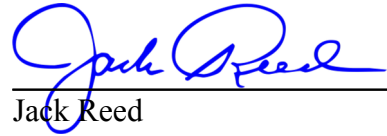
Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator



Catherine Cortez Masto
United States Senator



Tina Smith
United States Senator



Jack Reed
United States Senator



Alex Padilla
United States Senator



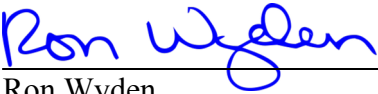
Sherrod Brown
United States Senator



Maria Cantwell
United States Senator



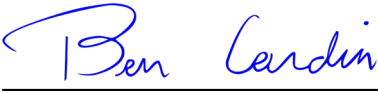
Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator



Ron Wyden
United States Senator



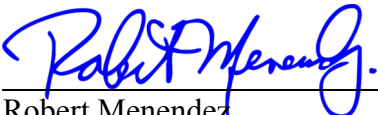
Christopher S. Murphy
United States Senator



Benjamin L. Cardin
United States Senator



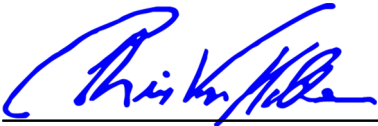
Jon Tester
United States Senator



Robert Menendez
United States Senator



Gary C. Peters
United States Senator



Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator



Cory A. Booker
United States Senator



Martin Heinrich
United States Senator



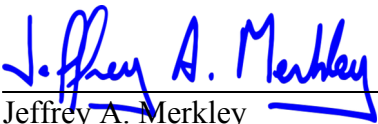
Bernard Sanders
United States Senator



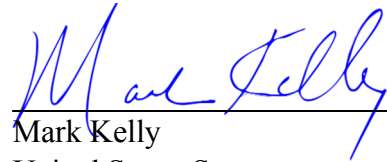
Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator



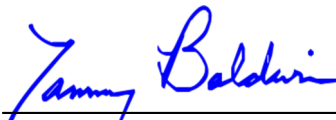
Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator



Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator



Mark Kelly
United States Senator



Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator



Mark R. Warner
United States Senator



Peter Welch
United States Senator



Debbie Stabenow
United States Senator

