

United States Senate

February 8, 2024

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

The Honorable Cindy Hyde-Smith
Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing,
and Urban Development, and Related
Agencies
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Schatz and Ranking Member Hyde-Smith:

As the Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development (THUD), and Related Agencies works to finalize the Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 Appropriations bill in line with the recent topline spending agreement, I respectfully request that you provide robust funding for Tribal housing programs. Nevada is proudly home to 28 Tribes, bands, councils, and colonies that are important contributors to Nevada's cultural fabric, and I am committed to protecting, empowering, and strengthening these communities. As a part of that mission, Congress must play an active role in ensuring that Tribes have access to all necessary federal resources, including funding to address Tribal housing.

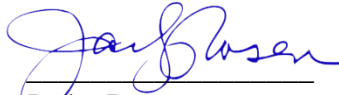
While Nevada and the nation as a whole face a severe housing shortage and affordability crisis, Tribal communities have some of the most urgent housing needs. Research shows that housing conditions in Native American households are often significantly worse than in non-Native households, with many facing substandard conditions and inadequate plumbing, heating, and electrical infrastructure. Further, overcrowding, high poverty rates, challenges to development, and barriers to affordable mortgage financing leave many Native Americans without access to a safe, quality, and affordable place to call home.

Despite the dire need for affordable housing resources, made worse by rising housing costs and historically high mortgage interest rates, Congress has consistently underfunded critical programs that support affordable housing development, operation, and maintenance in Indian Country. The Native American Housing Assistance and Self Determination Act (NAHASDA) is landmark legislation that has empowered Tribal communities to tailor affordable housing development to their local needs through several programs, including the Indian Housing Block Grant program, the Native Hawaiian Housing Block Grant program, and the Title VI Loan Guarantee program. These programs have had a tremendous impact on the communities they serve, with the Indian Housing Block Grant program funding the building or acquisition of over 41,500 affordable housing units since its inception.

However, despite NAHASDA's effectiveness, Congress has not reauthorized this important law for over a decade, and appropriators have funded its programs at largely stagnant levels, without even accounting for historically high inflation. That's why it is critical the Subcommittee finally provide substantially increased funding for critical housing programs that will boost affordable housing development and improve housing security in Nevada's Tribal communities.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. I look forward to working with you to support robust funding for Tribal housing programs.

Sincerely,



Jacky Rosen
United States Senator