

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 12, 2022

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) 2023 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 2022 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 2021 Annual Homeless Assessment Report, from 2020 to 2021, the number of veterans experiencing sheltered homelessness decreased by 10 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 19,750 veterans experienced sheltered homelessness on a single night in 2021. Unsheltered homelessness among veterans increased by 6 percent between the 2019 and 2020 point-in-time count.

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 2022 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



Kevin Cramer
United States Senator



Mazie K. Hirono
United States Senator



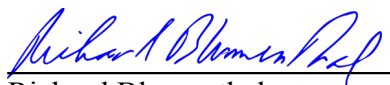
Maria Cantwell
United States Senator



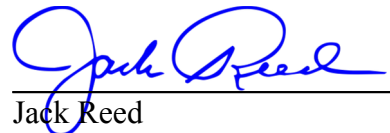
Joe Manchin III
United States Senator



Christopher S. Murphy
United States Senator



Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



Jack Reed
United States Senator



Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator



Benjamin L. Cardin
United States Senator



Tina Smith
United States Senator



Raphael G. Warnock
United States Senator



Cory A. Booker
United States Senator



Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator



Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator



Jon Tester
United States Senator



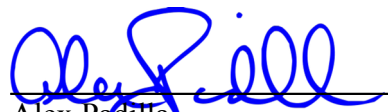
Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator



Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator



Sherrod Brown
United States Senator



Alex Padilla
United States Senator



Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator



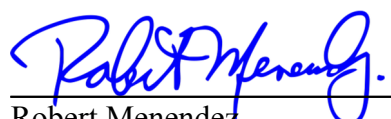
Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



Martin Heinrich
United States Senator



Bernard Sanders
United States Senator



Robert Menendez
United States Senator



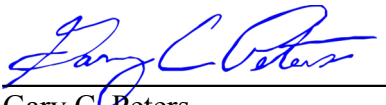
Catherine Cortez Masto
United States Senator



Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator



Ron Wyden
United States Senator



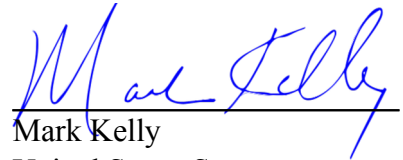
Gary C. Peters
United States Senator



Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator



Mark R. Warner
United States Senator



Mark Kelly
United States Senator