

July 19, 2021

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker of the House  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Chuck Schumer  
Senate Majority Leader  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Maxine Waters  
Chairwoman, House Financial Services Committee  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Sherrod Brown  
Chairman, Senate Banking Committee  
Washington, D.C. 50510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
House Minority Leader  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Senate Minority Leader  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Patrick McHenry  
Ranking Member, House Financial Services Committee  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Patrick Toomey  
Ranking Member, Senate Banking Committee  
Washington, D.C. 50510

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Majority Leader Schumer, Minority Leaders McConnell and McCarthy, Chairs Brown and Waters, and Ranking Members Toomey and McHenry:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, representing a diverse coalition of taxpayer, consumer, and free-market advocacy groups, we write to express our concerns with efforts to expand government housing assistance programs. Sweeping changes to public housing and project based rental assistance offered by some lawmakers in Congress would result in a massive expansion of the federal budget and turn assistance programs meant for low-income Americans into yet another widely available government entitlement program. We therefore respectfully urge you to stand with taxpayers and support reform, not expansion of these ineffective programs.

Our coalition recognizes that housing affordability is an immediate, everyday concern for millions of Americans nationwide, particularly for those who choose to live in densely populated urban areas. In many respects, the issue of affordable housing stems from government-manufactured restrictions on supply. It is imperative that the Congress, in conjunction with state and local governments, address the root causes of expensive housing costs - tariffs, restrictive zoning, and other government-imposed burdens. While some of the aforementioned causes are the responsibility of local government, at a national level Congress can support pro-growth policies that raise wages - thereby putting housing more in reach for lower-income Americans.

Unfortunately, some in Congress want to insert more government dominance into the housing and rental markets. These ill advised, big government short-term fixes ignore the aforementioned underlying issues that keep affordable housing out of reach for many. Effectively, these proposals would turn existing housing assistance programs into an expensive, unsustainable entitlement program that taxpayers can ill afford given our country's fiscal realities. For example, expanding housing vouchers to millions more people, will exacerbate the affordable housing crisis, not alleviate it. As such, creating a housing voucher entitlement program may simply put more low-income households in competition with each other for few available units without expanding the availability of supply.

Ensuring Americans have access to affordable housing is a critical issue that Congress should address, but it must be done cost-efficiently, within the constraints of our declining financial condition, and in a manner that empowers private markets to create more housing supply. Instead of flooding the market with more government spending, it is crucial that lawmakers go program by program to evaluate which are successful and which are not. In fact, as our organizations know all too well: more money does not always solve a problem. We strongly recommend that before throwing billions of more taxpayer dollars at a broken system, Congress surgically assess what is and is not working. For decades, our federal government has devoted significant resources towards reducing burdens on low-income families, yet these efforts have often not been successful. Before considering a major expansion of the housing choice voucher program, we should make the existing programs more effective.

As you continue to plot the path forward, we urge you to support policies that protect consumers and taxpayers while recognizing the role of markets. We hope to serve as a resource along the way.

Sincerely,



National Taxpayers Union



Heritage Action for America



60 Plus Association



American Consumer Institute



Americans for Tax Reform



Americans for Prosperity



Consumer Action for a Strong Economy



Center for a Free Economy



Center for Freedom and Prosperity



Club for Growth



Council for Citizens Against Government Waste



Taxpayers Protection Alliance