

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

February 27, 2024

The Honorable Marcia L. Fudge
Secretary
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
451 7th Street SW
Washington, DC 20410

Dear Secretary Fudge:

We appreciate your commitment to advancing housing opportunity and ensuring that all Americans have a safe and healthy home they can afford. As members of Congress representing the individuals living in the National Capital Region, we recognize the immense housing challenge affecting our region's communities and request assistance in alleviating barriers to housing production.

On November 6, 2023, the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) applied to the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for Pathways to Removing Obstacles to Housing (PRO Housing) funding. This regional application includes COG as the project manager and its partner local governments: the District of Columbia; and in Virginia, the City of Alexandria, Arlington County, Fairfax County, Loudoun County, and Prince William County; and in Maryland, Montgomery County, Prince George's County, and the City of Gaithersburg.

COG's application builds on a recently completed regional fair housing plan, the first in 25 years, and includes shared goals from that plan which advance the aims of the PRO Housing program. These goals include: increasing the amount of affordable housing, particularly in areas that have historically excluded it; preserving affordable housing and preventing displacement; and working across jurisdictions to identify opportunities for zoning alignment and reforms to increase the overall supply of housing.

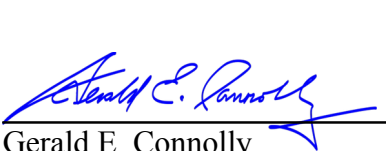
The activities included in the COG application have been thoroughly vetted by a robust, multi-year community engagement planning process that informed the development of the regional fair housing plan. The most challenging and persistent barrier to housing equity and opportunity in the metropolitan Washington region is the lack of affordable housing. Thus, PRO Housing funds will directly support implementation of the regional fair housing plan, which has broad support from community residents most impacted by the lack of affordable and fair housing choice as well as governments and elected officials across the region.

The proposal also builds on COG's regional housing initiative adopted in September 2019. Led by the local elected officials in our region, this initiative set ten-year production targets for the amount, location, and affordability level of the housing needed in the metropolitan

Washington region. The local governments in this region are already making the types of changes necessary to allow for the increased production of affordable housing. PRO Housing funding will accelerate other proposed actions and leave a lasting impact.

Thank you for your consideration of COG's proposal to the PRO Housing program, which would contribute to transformative investments in housing policy reforms in the metropolitan Washington region. The members of the National Capital Region Congressional Delegation welcome further engagement on this crucial issue and hope for continued partnership with HUD.

Sincerely,



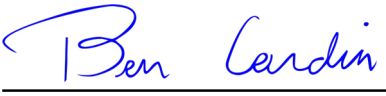
Gerald E. Connolly
Member of Congress



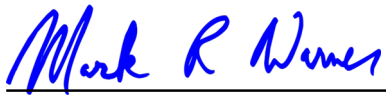
Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator



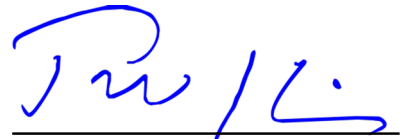
Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress



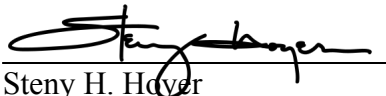
Benjamin L. Cardin
United States Senator



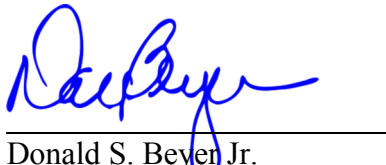
Mark R. Warner
United States Senator



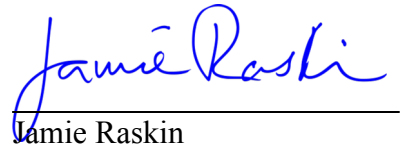
Tim Kaine
United States Senator



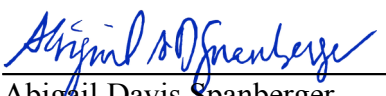
Steny H. Hoyer
Member of Congress



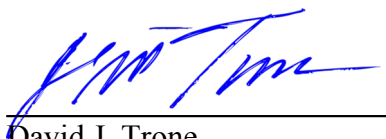
Donald S. Beyer Jr.
Member of Congress



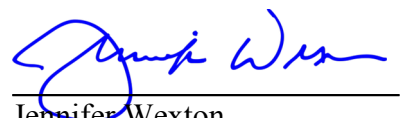
Jamie Raskin
Member of Congress



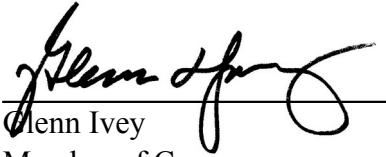
Abigail Davis Spanberger
Member of Congress



David J. Trone
Member of Congress



Jennifer Wexton
Member of Congress



Glenn Ivey
Member of Congress