



**CONSORTIUM FOR CITIZENS
WITH DISABILITIES**

July 20, 2018

The Honorable Jeb Hensarling, Chairman
The Honorable Maxine Waters, Ranking Member
Committee on Financial Services
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Hensarling and Ranking Member Waters:

On behalf of the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD) Housing Task Force, we are writing to express our opposition to HR 1511, the Homeless Children and Youth Act.

CCD is the largest coalition of national organizations working together to advocate for Federal public policy that ensures the self-determination, independence, empowerment, integration and inclusion of children and adults with disabilities in all aspects of society. The CCD Housing Task Force works with Congress and the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to increase access to decent, safe, affordable and accessible housing for all people with disabilities and to protect the rights guaranteed under the Fair Housing Act.

HR 1511 would expand eligibility for HUD's homeless assistance to include all families and youth who are poor and living with others for economic reasons, but without providing any more funding. This change would make millions of additional people eligible for HUD homeless assistance. It would overwhelm a homeless system that is already unable to serve 35 percent of homeless individuals that are unsheltered. The vast majority of these currently unsheltered individuals are living with significant disabilities. Under an expanded definition of homelessness and no new resources, families, children and unaccompanied youth with no place at all to live would find it even more difficult to access assistance.

HR 1151 would also prevent HUD from setting national priorities. It would remove a powerful tool for HUD to coordinate with other agencies in order to implement effective practices and move forward on plans to end chronic homelessness. Reduction over the past ten years in chronic homelessness has been a bipartisan success story. HUD's Homeless Assistance programs and the bipartisan HEARTH Act passed in 2009 have been central to this progress. HR 1511 would undo this progress.

The CCD Housing Task Force believes that instead of changing the definition of homelessness, Congress should instead focus on the larger problem of rental housing affordability, including its impact on the millions of Americans in doubled-up households. The small part of HUD's overall budget that is allocated to homeless programs must continue to be targeted toward those who have no viable housing at all. Problems that some eligible homeless families or youth have in

accessing homeless assistance are being addressed by alternatives that do not hurt these overall efforts to end chronic homelessness.

The CCD Housing Task Force urges the Committee to reject this proposal to reverse progress on ending chronic homelessness experienced by people with disabilities.

Sincerely,

CCD Housing Task Force Co-Chairs:

Andrew Sperling
National Alliance on Mental Illness

T.J. Sutcliffe
The Arc of the United States