



**CONSORTIUM FOR CITIZENS  
WITH DISABILITIES**

October 6, 2011

The Honorable Patty Murray, Chair  
Committee on Appropriations T-HUD  
Subcommittee  
United States Senate  
Dirksen Senate Office Building, Room 133  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Tom Latham, Chair  
Committee on Appropriations T-HUD  
Subcommittee  
United States House of Representatives  
Rayburn House Office Building, Room 2358A  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Susan Collins, Ranking  
Member  
Committee on Appropriations T-HUD  
Subcommittee  
United States Senate  
Dirksen Senate Office Building, Room 133  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable John Olver, Ranking Member  
Committee on Appropriations T-HUD  
Subcommittee  
United States House of Representatives  
Rayburn House Office Building, Room 2358A  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chair Murray, Chair Latham, Ranking Member Collins, and Ranking Member Olver:

The Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD) Housing Task Force writes to urge you to increase funding for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in the final FY 2012 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies (T-HUD) bill.

The CCD Housing Task Force is a coalition of national organizations which advocates on behalf of the housing needs of people with a variety of disabilities, including developmental disabilities, mental illness, sensory disabilities, physical disabilities, and intellectual disabilities. CCD Housing Task Force members include Easter Seals, the United Spinal Association, United Cerebral Palsy, the National Disability Rights Network, the American Network of Community Options and Resources, Mental Health America, the National Alliance on Mental Illness, The Arc, the Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law, and Lutheran Services in America. We are pleased to work with the Campaign for Housing and Community Development Funding (CHCDF), a coalition of national affordable housing and community development groups, to support HUD funding levels that meet the needs of low and moderate income renters and homeowners.

People with disabilities face a housing crisis across the United States. In 2010, as a national average, a person with a disability receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI) needed to pay 112% of his or her monthly income to rent a modest one-bedroom unit, leaving no income for food, clothes, or other necessities.<sup>1</sup> Approximately 4.5 million people received SSI in 2010. The unmet housing needs of people with disabilities are further reflected in the hundreds of thousands of people who want to leave restrictive institutions or who live with aging caregivers.

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<sup>1</sup> *Priced Out in 2010: The Housing Crisis for People with Disabilities*. Technical Assistance Collaborative, Inc. and Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities Housing Task Force, June 2011.

The Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities Housing Task Force has significant concerns over the proposed cuts to HUD's 2012 funding in the House and Senate appropriations bills. HUD programs as a whole are essential to helping many low income people with disabilities and their families live independently in the community and avoid either homelessness or costly, unnecessary institutionalization.

We are particularly concerned about the need to adequately fund HUD's Section 811 Supportive Housing for Persons with Disabilities Program. Section 811 is the only HUD program dedicated to creating scattered site, affordable housing, linked with supportive services, for people with the most significant disabilities. Recent reforms to Section 811 made by the bipartisan Frank Melville Supportive Housing Investment Act of 2010 have created new opportunities to incorporate supportive housing for people with disabilities into larger affordable housing initiatives. These changes will maximize the number of units produced and foster community inclusion of people with disabilities.

The House and Senate bills would unnecessarily reduce the affordable housing and community development resources available to extremely low, low, and moderate income households. The Budget Control Act mandates cuts of approximately 5% in non-security programs but the House cuts to HUD programs are 7% and the Senate cuts are 10%. Under the House bill, the HUD budget would reach its lowest level since 2003, while the Senate legislation would leave HUD programs funded at the lowest since 2001.<sup>2</sup> These historically deep cuts would put thousands of households at risk of losing their housing, and exacerbate the economic hardships of thousands more in need of affordable housing and community development resources.

To protect these families and communities, we strongly urge you to increase funding for HUD programs above the levels in the House and Senate bills. This could be achieved by adopting the House allocation for HUD programs and then using additional budget authority created by the Senate's proposed rescissions, so long as any included rescissions do not result in increased hardship for low income families or communities.

Sincerely,

CCD Housing Task Force Co-Chairs:

Bonnie Milstein  
Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law

Andrew Sperling  
National Alliance on Mental Illness

T.J. Sutcliffe  
The Arc of the United States

CC: Hon. Daniel Inouye  
Hon. Thad Cochran  
Hon. Harold Rogers  
Hon. Norm Dicks

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<sup>2</sup> Both are adjusted for inflation.