



September 20, 2023

The Honorable Patty Murray
Chair, U.S. Senate Committee on
Appropriations
154 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Kay Granger
Chair, U.S. House Committee on
Appropriations
1026 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Susan Collins
Vice Chair, U.S. Senate Committee on
Appropriations
413 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member, U.S. House Committee on
Appropriations
2413 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chair Murray, Vice Chair Collins, Chair Granger, and Ranking Member DeLauro:

The undersigned members of the Consortium for Constituents with Disabilities (CCD) and the CCD Housing Task Force urge you to provide critical funding increases to affordable housing, homelessness, and community development programs in the fiscal year (FY) 2024 Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development (THUD) funding bill. 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 free from racism, ableism, sexism, and xenophobia, as well as LGBTQ+ based discrimination and religious intolerance. The CCD Housing Task Force ensures that all people with disabilities have safe, stable, accessible, affordable, integrated housing that enables people to live in communities of their choosing, with full access to home and community-based services and supports.

People with disabilities may be served across all federal housing programs; however, there are only two programs that explicitly provide affordable, accessible, integrated housing for adults with disabilities and their families who are extremely low and low-income: Mainstream Vouchers and Section 811 Project-Based Rental Assistance (PRA). **We commend both of your committees' proposed FY24 funding for Mainstream Vouchers at \$686 million. Outside of budgetary matters, we request that you include bill or report language about the following priorities for Mainstream Vouchers to ensure increased program effectiveness:**

- Direct HUD to provide Public Housing Agencies (PHAs) with certain flexibilities in the program administration. These flexibilities would allow PHAs to adopt certain specialized policies for these programs, enabling them to create separate waiting lists, extend the time households search for housing,

apply reduced screening criteria, accept direct referrals from supportive service agencies, and provide landlord incentives and security deposits.

- Flexibilities for PHAs to allow all specialty voucher programs, including Mainstream, the flexibility to adopt a 90- to 120-day referral timeline. It is difficult for people with disabilities to find units for lease within the current 90-day timeframe, which increases the risk of homelessness and/or institutionalization. This extended referral timeline would allow more people more time to enter these programs.

In addition to Mainstream Voucher, we urge that your committees provide sufficient funding for HUD Section 811 PRA. Currently, the House's recommendation of \$208 million will barely cover existing projects, with no room for expansion. Without state housing agencies having a predictable flow of annual funds to maintain the pipeline of new units, there will be detrimental impacts on state housing finance systems and people with disabilities who desperately need homes. We are deeply concerned about proposed funding levels and their potentially devastating impacts on people with disabilities who already experience an outsized risk of institutionalization, homelessness, and housing insecurity; in fact, over 18 million disabled people are eligible for federal housing assistance but are still not receiving it.¹ **We request you fund 811 PRA with at least \$360 million. In addition, we recommend you include the following directives in statutory language to ensure increased program effectiveness: direct HUD to cease funding the 811 capital advance program because it still funds segregated housing, undermining Disabled peoples' rights under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, and direct HUD to release all funds through 811 PRA.**

We also strongly urge you to remove any bill language that would prohibit HUD from using funds to implement the proposed Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH) Rule.² The proposed AFFH Rule is critical for ensuring that people with disabilities have equal access to housing opportunities.

Lastly, on July 20, 2023, the Government Accountability Office released "HUD Rental Assistance: Enhanced Data and Strategy Could Improve Oversight of Accessibility Requirements." The report found 1) HUD does not collect certain key data on households with disabilities that participate in its three largest rental assistance programs, and 2) HUD does not have a comprehensive, documented strategy for overseeing compliance with reasonable accommodation requirements³. These findings are compounded by HUD's Office of the Inspector General's February 2022 report revealing that the agency does not have adequate policies and procedures to properly process requests for reasonable accommodation⁴. Moreover, people with disabilities already experience the highest rate of housing discrimination reported to HUD⁵. **If Congress does not direct HUD to take action, there will only be further administrative failures and discrimination toward disabled people. We urge Congress to use the final budget as an opportunity to direct HUD to fulfill the GAO's recommendations that:**

- 1) "The Secretary of HUD should ensure the Assistant Secretaries for the Offices of Public and Indian Housing and Multifamily Housing Programs systematically collect and maintain data on household requests for reasonable accommodations, including structural modifications, and the status of these requests in the Public Housing, Housing Choice Voucher, and Section 8 Project-Based Rental Assistance programs"

¹ Urban Institute, [People with Disabilities in the US Face Urgent Barriers to Housing](#)

² 88 Fed. Reg. 8516 (Feb. 9, 2023), <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2023-02-09/pdf/2023-00625.pdf>.

³ <https://www.gao.gov/products/gao-23-105083>

⁴ [HUD Did Not Have Adequate Policies and Procedures for Ensuring That Public Housing Agencies Properly Processed Requests for Reasonable Accommodation](#), HUD Office of the Inspector General

⁵ [Fair Housing Trends Report](#), National Fair Housing Alliance

- 2) “The Secretary of HUD should ensure the Assistant Secretaries for the Offices of Public and Indian Housing, Multifamily Housing Programs, and Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity develop and implement a strategy for overseeing HUD-assisted housing providers' compliance with reasonable accommodation requirements in its rental assistance programs.”⁶

Please contact the CCD Housing Task Force Co-Chairs if you have any questions or would like more information. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

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Amputee Coalition
Association of Assistive Technology Act Programs
Autistic Women & Nonbinary Network
Caring Across Generations
Cure SMA
Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund
Eggleston
Justice in Aging
National PLAN Alliance (NPA)
SAGE
TASH
The Arc of the US

⁶ <https://www.gao.gov/products/gao-23-105083>