

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

April 4, 2019

The Honorable David Price  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Transportation,  
Housing and Urban Development,  
and Related Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States Congress  
2108 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mario Diaz-Balart  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Transportation,  
Housing and Urban Development,  
and Related Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States Congress  
404 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chair Price and Ranking Member Diaz-Balart:

As the Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies (T-HUD) begins its important work on Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 funding, we urge you to provide additional funding for the Public Housing Capital and Operating Funds. We cannot wait any longer to preserve the nation's most at-risk public housing and improve the health and safety of tens of thousands of residents. Federal funding created public housing and is critical to maintaining it in a decent and safe condition for our nation's most vulnerable families, elderly, and people with disabilities. This investment requires a robust FY 2020 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development and Related Agencies (T-HUD) 302(b) subcommittee allocation and we urge the Appropriation Committee to increase the allocation.

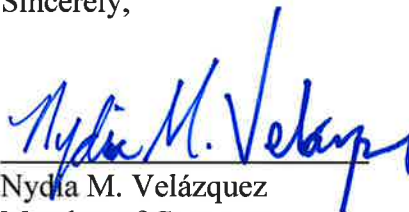
We urge you to halt the deterioration of public housing infrastructure by providing at least \$5 billion to the Public Housing Capital Fund. At least \$600 million of the increased funding should be strategically targeted to capital repairs related to mold, lead-based paint, and other hazards that would improve the health of public housing residents. As an example, the root cause of mold infestations in public housing includes leaky roofs, crumbling exterior bricks, and old piping. When it comes to lead, the scientific evidence is clear: no blood lead level is safe. Lead poisoning is a particularly serious hazard for children that is permanent and irreversible, and causes significant biological damage linked to cognitive and behavioral impairment. This strategically targeted funding will allow public housing authorities ("PHAs") nationwide to conduct repairs that would improve the health and quality of life for tens of thousands of children, elderly, and disabled residents.

We also urge you to fund the Public Housing Operating Fund at 100 percent proration in order to address the estimated annual operating costs. Funding public housing agencies at 100 percent of the funding needed according to formula would allow PHAs to respond more quickly and efficiently to health and safety-related maintenance issues. For properties with mold, this funding would allow PHAs to provide quicker remediation efforts, take steps to prevent mold from forming, and provide a higher level of basic property maintenance.

Without these investments to fill critical funding gaps, public housing authorities across the country are at risk of losing valuable housing units at a faster rate than our current annual loss of 10,000 units per year, and add exponentially to the 200,000 units that have been lost since 2010.

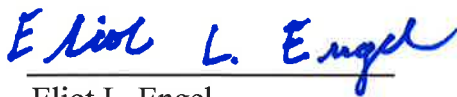
After years of underfunding public housing we are at a cross-road; we can invest and preserve our nation's valuable public housing, or we can choose to lose public housing units due to underfunding, decay, and neglect. We urge you to increase funding to preserve public housing.

Sincerely,

  
Nydia M. Velázquez  
Member of Congress


  
Gregory W. Meeks  
Member of Congress

  
Carolyn B. Maloney  
Member of Congress

  
Eliot L. Engel  
Member of Congress

  
Yvette D. Clarke  
Member of Congress

  
Adriano Espaillat  
Member of Congress

  
Jerrold L. Nadler  
Member of Congress

  
Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez  
Member of Congress



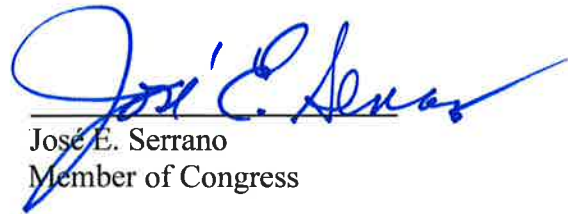
Hakeem Jeffries  
Member of Congress



Max Rose  
Member of Congress



Grace Meng  
Member of Congress



José E. Serrano  
Member of Congress