



LOUISIANA HOUSING ALLIANCE

June 22, 2015

The Honorable Bill Cassidy

United States Senate

703 Hart Senate Office Building

Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Cassidy,

As you know, the FY16 THUD Appropriations bill passed by the House Appropriations Committee on May 13th proposes to eliminate all of the 2016 funding for the National Housing Trust Fund (NHTF). We strongly support the National Housing Trust Fund (NHTF) and urge you, as a member of the Senate THUD Subcommittee, to reject any effort to reduce, divert, or eliminate funding from this important housing development program.

The NHTF is the only federal program that provides new money specifically to expand the supply of rental housing affordable to extremely low income (ELI) households, who in most of the country earn less than the federal poverty level.

In Louisiana, there is an absolute shortage of 110,522 housing units affordable and available to ELI families. This shortage is the primary cause of homelessness, which is one of the many reasons why the NHTF - and its targeting of this specific shortage - would be so valuable to our state.

The funding for the NHTF is a dedicated source of revenue on the mandatory side of the federal budget, and as such, is not subject to annual appropriations. Funding for the NHTF is based on an assessment of 4.2 basis points of the annual volume of business of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. This is a reliable, predictable stream of funding that is supposed to be separate from HUD appropriations.

We know that the THUD Subcommittee is working under severe fiscal constraints, due to caps imposed by the Budget Control Act and sequestration. However, the solution to this problem should not be to raid the funds dedicated to the NHTF to make up for lost appropriated funds.

Louisiana cannot afford to lose out on this funding to house its most vulnerable families, especially since the State does not invest any revenue in housing our families, many of whom are employed in low-wage jobs. We respectfully request that you not follow the House

Appropriations Committee's lead in further frustrating efforts to put NHTF dollars to work in Louisiana and around the country.

Thank you for your consideration of our concerns.

Sincerely,

Louisiana Housing Alliance

Advocacy Center of Louisiana

Capital Area Agency on Aging

Capital Area Alliance for the Homeless

Central City Renaissance Alliance

Coalition of HIV/AIDS NonProfits and Governmental Entities (CHANGE)

Community Directions, Inc.

Crescent City Community Land Trust

DeQuincy Housing Authority

Families and Friends of Louisiana's Incarcerated Children

First Evangelist Housing Community Development Corporation

Foundation For Louisiana

Greater Alexandria Economic Development Authority

Greater New Orleans Fair Housing Action Center

Greater New Orleans Housing Alliance

Habitat for Humanity St. Tammany West

Harmony Neighborhood Development

Houma-Terrebonne Housing Authority

Iberiabank Mortgage

Jane Place Neighborhood Sustainability Initiative (JPNSI)

Jericho Road Episcopal Housing Initiative

Jerusalem Economic Development Corporation

LA Health and Rehab Center, Inc.

Louisiana AIDS Advocacy Network (LAAN)

Louisiana Health and Rehabilitation Options, Inc.

Lower 9th Ward Homeownership Association
Macon Ridge Community Development Corporation
Mid-City Redevelopment Alliance, Inc.
Multi-Cultural Development Center
New Orleans Area Habitat for Humanity
People's Organization for Social Equality
Project Build a Future
Providence Community Housing
Puentes New Orleans
RE/MAX First
Resource and Fund Development, LLC
Shelter Resources, Inc. Orleans
Union Parish Section 8 Housing
United Way of Northeast Louisiana
Unity of Greater New Orleans
Urban Restoration Enhancement Corporation