

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 1, 2011

The Honorable Patty Murray, Chairman
The Honorable Susan Collins, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Murray and Ranking Member Collins:

As you near consideration of the fiscal year 2012 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill, we urge the Subcommittee maintain the Federal government's commitment to community development programs at the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and support the highest possible funding for the Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) Program.

We thank you for your past support of this vital program. The CDBG program is the centerpiece of the Federal government's efforts to help more than 1,200 entitlement cities, urban counties, and States meet the needs of low- and moderate-income communities. It is one of the most effective Federal domestic programs to revitalize communities with proven results. It helps to fund a wide range of activities, including homeownership assistance, housing rehabilitation, public improvements, public services, and economic development projects. According to HUD, CDBG housing projects assisted 865,874 households over the past six years, including financial assistance to new homeowners and rehabilitation assistance to the elderly and other existing homeowners. In addition, over the past six years, the program helped create and retain 259,346 jobs for low-and moderate income persons through a variety of economic development activities and provided vital public services to over 24 million persons.

We are very concerned about the impact past cuts have had on the program and the continued impact the proposed cuts will have on the communities that rely on this funding to serve their most vulnerable residents, principally low- and moderate-income persons. The CDBG formula allocation has been cut by over \$1 billion dollars since 1995 and is now at its lowest funding level since 1992. Because of the cuts to the formula allocation, programs and projects funded by CDBG and the number of residents served by these activities have been cut too.

Communities will continue to experience setbacks with a decline in funding for the CDBG formula allocation. Therefore, we urge you to provide adequate funding in the FY12 THUD Appropriations bill to allow the CDBG program to continue vital rehabilitation and improvement projects. Thank you for your consideration of this request and your support of community development and revitalization.

Sincerely,



PATRICK LEAHY
United States Senator



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