



November 9, 2022

Chairman Patrick Leahy
Senate Appropriations Committee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Chairwoman Rosa DeLauro
House Appropriations Committee
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Vice-Chairman Richard Shelby
Senate Appropriations Committee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Ranking Member Kay Granger
House Appropriations Committee
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Leahy and Ranking Member Shelby and Chairwoman DeLauro, and Ranking Member Granger:

The undersigned members of the Consortium for Constituents with Disabilities (CCD) Housing Task Force, thank you for working to pass the fiscal year FY 2023 budget and urge you to work with your colleagues to ensure affordable housing, homelessness, and community development programs receive the highest allocation possible, with a particular lens towards racial, gender, and disability equity.

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 works to ensure 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.



Before the pandemic and continuing to combat COVID-19, people with disabilities remain at outsized risk of institutionalization, homelessness, and housing insecurity. All people experiencing chronic homelessness are living with disabilities, which make up 19% of the unhoused population. Over 18 million disabled people face housing instability and are eligible for federal housing assistance but remain unserved¹. For disabled renters, cost burdens can be particularly costly due to additional medical and services expenses, disproportionate rates of unemployment and low wages, and limited ability to earn or save without threatening essential supports and benefits. These cost burdens, in addition to widespread housing discrimination and a severe lack of accessible units, leaves renters with disabilities at a much greater risk of facing eviction, homelessness, and institutionalization. These burdens fall especially hard on women with disabilities and people of color with disabilities, with disabled women of color facing the greatest risk of homelessness². Overall, the nation's federally assisted housing stock and rental assistance have not kept up with the need for affordable, accessible, and integrated housing for people with and without disabilities³.

As we approach the end of this Congressional session, we ask you to ensure that all affordable housing & community development programs are funded at the highest levels possible, including but not limited to the HUD Section 811 Project Rental Assistance program. This is essential because as rental rates rise each year, appropriations for housing and community development need to increase. This is not just to maintain the current number of people and programs assisted but to serve the majority of eligible households that are going unserved.

Along with the recommendations led by the [Campaign for Housing and Community Development Funding](#), we would like to highlight the following questions related to the HUD Section 811 program and the Mainstream Housing Voucher Program:

At minimum, \$667 million in Mainstream vouchers.

The Housing Task Force wants to increase access to Mainstream vouchers by people with disabilities who are institutionalized or at risk of institutionalization. Federal mandates for community integration, like the Olmstead Supreme Court Decision and the HCBS Settings Rule, and programs like the Mainstream Housing Voucher, explicitly seek to make these rights a reality for people with disabilities who need supportive services in their own homes.

The mainstream program suffers from some of the same challenges other programs targeted to most impacted populations (people who experienced homelessness, veterans, in the FY22

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

² [Recognizing and Addressing Housing Insecurity for Disabled Renters - Center for American Progress.](#)

³ [Federal Rental Assistance Fact Sheets | Center on Budget and Policy Priorities](#)



budget a pilot program for people with serious mental illnesses) that HUD and Congress have addressed through special budget language providing the Secretary with waivers and special uses of voucher funding. EHV program, for example, provides the Secretary with waiver authority, including using EHV funds for PHA incentives, housing search assistance, and special waiting list referral methods. **We urge Congress to provide these same waivers and special uses for the Mainstream program in order to increase utilization and overall operations.**

The Housing Task Force suggests **targeting some of the Mainstream vouchers specifically to state PHAs** that have partnerships to serve people with disabilities in institutions either through Money Follows the Person, PRA Program, Settlement Agreements, 1115 Medicaid demonstrations, or others. We understand that most but not all states have state PHAs. Those that do not, should have the opportunity to create one for the purpose of administering this program at the state level. We estimate that \$100 million per year in new Mainstream voucher funding will allow each of 50 states to serve 200 people transitioning from institutions per year (which in no way meets the true need).

At a minimum, \$400 million for HUD Section 811 (PRA):

We recommend at minimum \$400 million in new funding **annually** in addition to the renewals. A regular appropriation cycle will help the PRA program to become a routine part of each state's development process – generally through the LIHTC program – resulting in a much larger pool of integrated, affordable, accessible housing for people with disabilities. Congressional language allows HUD to use funds for capital advances and PRA. We ask Congress only to fund the PRA model because it meets the requirements that housing be integrated amongst people with and without disabilities. We ask Congress to urge HUD to spend previously appropriated funds immediately and for HUD to provide Congress with a brief report within 60 days as to the barriers to program implementation.

Along with fulfilling this housing need, Congress must **also include the highest funding possible in FY23 for Medicaid Home & Community Based Services** to ensure that extremely low and low-income people with disabilities of all ages can remain in their homes or transition from institutional settings into affordable, accessible and integrated housing with the services they need at home to thrive.

In conclusion, CCD Housing Task Force urges that you and your colleagues pass an FY23 spending bill that funds HUD and USDA Rural Development affordable housing, homelessness, and community development programs at the highest levels possible to ensure much-needed support for the millions of low and extremely low-income people with and without disabilities.



Sincerely,

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