

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 13, 2024

The Honorable Brian Schatz
Chairman
Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing,
and Urban Development, and Related
Agencies
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Cindy Hyde-Smith
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing,
and Urban Development, and Related
Agencies
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Schatz and Ranking Member Hyde-Smith:

As the Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development, and Related Agencies (THUD) Subcommittee finalizes its Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 appropriations bill, we encourage you to support those who have defended our freedom by funding the Department of Housing and Urban Development's Veterans Affairs and Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) program at or above the FY 2024 enacted level.


HUD-VASH combines HUD's Housing Choice Voucher rental assistance program for low income renters with case management and clinical services for veterans provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). The program targets chronically homeless veterans who often have severe mental and physical health problems, and/or substance use disorders. Frequent emergency room visits, multiple treatment attempts, and limited access to social support increase the barriers for homeless veterans to obtaining permanent, stable housing. Among the VA's homeless assistance programs, HUD-VASH enrolls the largest number and percentage of veterans who have experienced long-term or repeated homelessness.

Due to its focus on chronic homelessness, the HUD-VASH program has been highly successful in helping our nation's veterans escape homelessness, combining housing assistance and supportive services into one resource. Since 2008, HUD has awarded over 100,000 HUD-VASH vouchers through public housing agencies across the country, and this investment has paid dividends: since 2009, the number of veterans experiencing homelessness has been reduced by 52 percent. However, without sustained federal investment, these trends are at risk of reversing. According to HUD's 2023 Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress, from 2022 to 2023, the total number of veterans experiencing homelessness increased by 7 percent. This increase included a three percent increase in veterans experiencing sheltered homelessness and a 14 percent increase in unsheltered veterans.

HUD-VASH vouchers ensure that women and men in uniform who have sacrificed so much for our country have a stable place to call home and the supportive services they need to heal and rebuild their lives. That is why HUD-VASH funding must be increased, or at least remain level, to achieve the goal of ending homelessness among veterans.

Particularly at a time of rising rents and housing costs for all Americans, including our nation's veterans. We urge you to fund HUD-VASH at or above the FY 2024 enacted level. With steady or additional funding, public housing authorities can maximize the number of families served, and HUD-VASH case managers will have the tools to comprehensively address the needs of homeless veterans in America.


Sincerely,



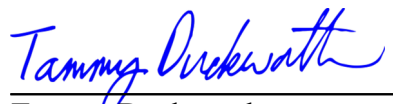
Jacky Rosen
United States Senator



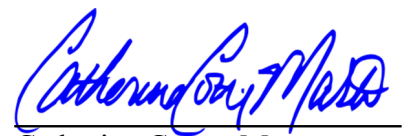
Sherrod Brown
United States Senator




Tina Smith
United States Senator



Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator



Catherine Cortez Masto
United States Senator



Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator



Mazie K. Hirono
United States Senator



Christopher S. Murphy
United States Senator



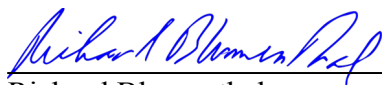
Raphael Warnock
United States Senator



Debbie Stabenow
United States Senator



Alex Padilla
United States Senator



Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



Jack Reed
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Mark R. Warner
United States Senator




Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator



Benjamin L. Cardin
United States Senator



Maria Cantwell
United States Senator



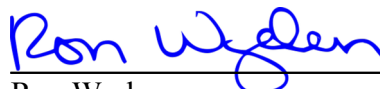
Jeffrey A. Merkley
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Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator



Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator



Ron Wyden
United States Senator



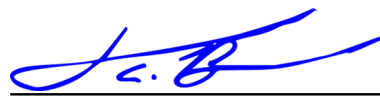
Robert Menendez
United States Senator



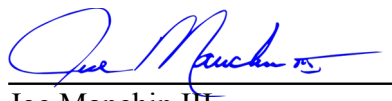
John Hickenlooper
United States Senator



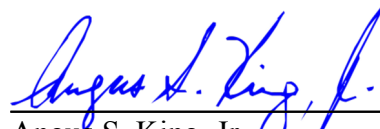
Jon Tester
United States Senator



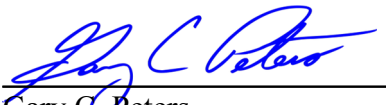
Cory A. Booker
United States Senator



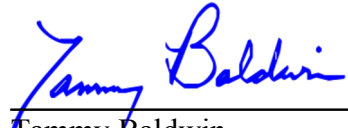
Joe Manchin III
United States Senator



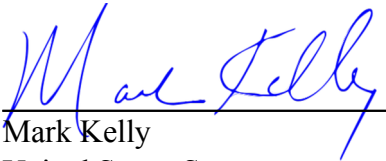
Angus S. King, Jr.
United States Senator



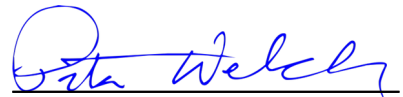
Gary C. Peters
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Tammy Baldwin
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Mark Kelly
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Peter Welch
United States Senator



Bernard Sanders
United States Senator



Richard J. Durbin
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