Address the Housing Crisis by Increasing Rental Assistance

Please work to lift the Fiscal Year 2020 caps on federal spending and **support a $5 billion increase in Housing Choice Vouchers** **over the next two years** byspeaking directly to congressional leadership, along with Senators Collins and Reed or Representatives Price and Diaz-Balart as Chairs and Ranking Members of the Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, Subcommittees of Appropriations. In addition, **support bipartisan efforts to ban housing discrimination based on income source** to create more opportunities for families.

The Affordable Housing Crisis

Millions of low-income working families struggle to find affordable housing in the U.S. Over 70 percent of extremely low-income renters spend more than half their income on housing. Consider this:

* A National Low Income Housing Coalition study shows [there is no U.S .state where a worker making the prevailing minimum wage can afford a two-bedroom apartment](https://www.cnn.com/2018/06/14/us/minimum-wage-2-bedroom-trnd/index.html).
* Nationwide, there are only 35 affordable rental homes available for every 100 extremely low-income renter households.
* The supply of rental units available for less than $800/month has dropped by 261,000 since 2005, according to the Joint Center for Housing Studies at Harvard University.
* Only one in four eligible low-income households receives federal housing assistance.

The [federal government invests significant resources to support homeownership,](https://prosperitynow.org/blog/how-us-tax-code-drives-inequality-and-what-we-can-do-fix-it) largely to the benefit of wealthy, white households. Since families of color are more likely to rent, the rising cost of rent and decline in affordable homes becomes a barrier to building wealth, as more income is spent on rent and less on savings and other wealth-building activities. An increase of $4 billion in Housing Choice Vouchers would help address the housing crisis, funding 340,000 new “Section 8” vouchers over two years.

In addition, families can face discrimination. Two-thirds of families can be denied by landlords simply for getting assistance, creating yet more barriers to economic security. Bipartisan proposals such as the *Fair Housing Improvement Act of 2018* introduced in 2018 by Senators Kaine (D-VA) and Hatch (R-UT) seek to address this.

**RESULTS requests that you support lifting the spending caps for FY20 and increasing funding for Housing Choice Vouchers by $5 billion over two years by speaking to key negotiators, while endorsing bipartisan efforts to ban housing discrimination based on income source.** Longer term, we should increase access to affordable housing and address the legacy of discriminatory policies through policies like refundable renters’ credits and first-time homebuyer tax credits, emergency stabilization funds for families facing evictions, and address barriers such as credit scores, application fees, past evictions, and discriminatory zoning regulations.