

United States House of Representatives
Committee on Financial Services
Washington, D.C. 20515

March 17, 2016

The Honorable Hal Rogers
Chairman
U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Appropriations
H-305, the Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Nita Lowey
Ranking Member
U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Appropriations
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mario Diaz-Ballart
Chairman
U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing
and Urban Development, and Related
Agencies
2358-A Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable David Price
Ranking Member
U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing
and Urban Development and Related
Agencies
2108 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Chairman Rogers, Ranking Member Lowey, Chairman Diaz-Ballart, and Ranking Member Price:

As you consider the FY 2017 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies (THUD) appropriations bill, we urge you to make homelessness a top priority. Homelessness has reached crisis proportions in some parts of the country, and we cannot expect to make any significant progress towards our nation's goals for ending homelessness without substantial new funding. For this reason, I respectfully request that you not only fund the Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD'S) McKinney Vento Homeless Assistance Grants (McKinney Vento) at the President's budget request of \$2.66 billion in FY 2017, but also that you appropriate an additional \$5 billion to McKinney Vento, designated as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 as amended. By providing this emergency relief funding over and above the Administration's request for annual appropriations, we can provide a surge of new resources to those communities and people who so desperately need it.

With the passage of the HEARTH Act in 2009, Congress charged the Administration with creating a National Strategic Plan to End Homelessness. In compliance with this provision, the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) put forth the Opening Doors strategy in 2010 – the nation's first comprehensive federal strategy to prevent and end homelessness in America. Since the inception of this strategy, our country has made some

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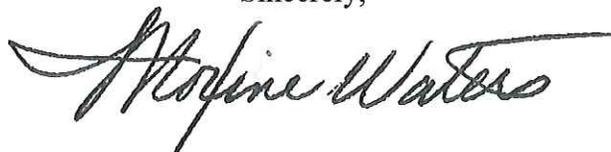
progress towards the measurable goals that Opening Doors established for ending homelessness in America. This progress is directly attributable to the multi-agency coordination and priority-setting under Opening Doors, as well as new funding targeted for homeless veterans. Unfortunately, the most recent results of the annual point-in-time count reported by HUD showed that this progress has virtually stalled in the absence of new funding.

In the richest country in the world, it is simply unconscionable that 564,708 of our neighbors across the country are living without a place to call home. Major metropolitan areas in particular are struggling to address recent increases in their homeless populations. Some cities have experienced such serious increases in their homeless populations that they had gone so far as to declare that homelessness has reached a state of emergency. The federal government must recognize the crisis at hand and support these communities in their efforts to aid the homeless.

It is clear that we will not make any significant progress towards ending homelessness in this country if Congress is not willing to provide the funding that is necessary to achieve that goal. That is why I respectfully request that you meet the President's request for \$2.66 billion for McKinney Vento, and further provide \$5 billion in emergency funding for that program in FY 2017, pursuant to the authority under section 251(b)(2)(A) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 as amended.

Thank you for your consideration of this important request. If you have any questions about this letter, please contact Esther Kahng with Ranking Member Waters at Esther.Kahng@mail.house.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Maxine Waters". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long, sweeping underline.

MAXINE WATERS
Ranking Member