

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

January 16, 2019

President Donald J. Trump
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Trump:

We write to express our deep concern regarding the harmful impacts the current government shutdown is having on the ability of Americans to afford their homes. This partial shutdown is undermining both the short-term operations and long-term viability of our affordable housing programs that serve over four million Americans, the majority of whom are seniors and people with disabilities living on a fixed income. For the sake of the families whose homes are at stake, we urge you to end the shutdown and protect the American people.

An immediate result of the shutdown is that the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has been forced to scramble to find funds to renew federal contracts for 650 project-based rental assistance properties, housing tens of thousands of low-income renters, that have expired since the government shutdown began. Additional contracts will expire later in January and February, should the shutdown continue, as HUD does not have funding to renew contracts while the government is shut down. HUD proposes that private owners use their individual funding reserves, where available, to cover shortfalls. The longer the shutdown continues, the more untenable this guidance becomes.

Additionally, the shutdown will delay public housing authorities from receiving funding to help address pressing capital needs, such as fixing boilers and repairing leaking roofs. Funding is also dwindling for grants that support developmental projects and programs in local communities that depend on such funding to serve low-income families. Finally, the lapse in federal funding is curbing economic growth as more Americans are unable to purchase homes due to the Federal Housing Authority's (FHA) delay in processing loans.

The American people should not be used as leverage, or be held hostage, to fulfill a political agenda. The longer this shutdown extends, the more harm will be done to seniors, families with children, people with disabilities, and other Americans who rely on these programs. We urge you to end this shutdown and provide immediate relief to Americans being impacted by this funding crisis. In these times of uncertainty and tension, we must continue to prioritize the American people. We owe it to the people we serve to choose their best interest over politics.

Sincerely,

MARC A. VEASEY
Member of Congress

MARK R. WARNER
United States Senator

TOM UDALL
United States Senator



PATTY MURRAY
United States Senator

TAMMY DUCKWORTH
United States Senator

JEFFREY A. MERKLEY
United States Senator

KAMALA D. HARRIS
United States Senator

GARY C. PETERS
United States Senator

RICHARD J. DURBIN
United States Senator

JACKY ROSEN
United States Senator

BENJAMIN L. CARDIN
United States Senator

BRIAN SCHATZ
United States Senator

DEBBIE STABENOW
United States Senator