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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515-6015

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May 19, 2020

The Honorable Ben Carson
Secretary
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
451 7th Street S.W.
Washington, DC 20410

Secretary Carson,

We are writing you with serious concerns about the delay in the distribution of housing and community development funding provided in the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act.

The CARES Act provided \$5 billion for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, \$4 billion for the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) program, and \$65 million for the Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) program. The Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Office of Community Planning and Development (CPD) issued allocations for these programs within days of enactment of the CARES Act, giving communities certainty that Federal resources were on the way. However, these funds have yet to be made available at a time when communities most need these resources to mitigate the ongoing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Congress provided flexible sources of housing and community development funds in the CARES Act to allow grantees to provide safe housing to the homeless, reduce the risk of community transmission of COVID-19, and protect the health and preserve the dignity of the most vulnerable in our communities. In order to utilize CDBG and ESG funding, grantees must amend their Consolidated Plans. Without a Federal Register notice that outlines the administrative requirements for funds, a full accounting of the waiver process and the process for submitting a plan amendment, grantees cannot submit a Consolidated Plan amendment. The HOPWA notice on use of funds was finally published on May 8th, but HOPWA grantees continue to wait for grant agreements before they receive any funding. We want to ensure that CARES Act CDBG, ESG and HOPWA funds can be used to improve the lives of Americans, and prevent infections, death, and human suffering.

We ask you to issue all administrative requirements for the CDBG, ESG and HOPWA programs immediately and begin to execute plan amendments and disburse funds to communities. Please provide us with the Department's timeline for publishing the administrative requirements for HUD's CARES Act funding; providing grantees with access to CARES Act funding; guidance on coordinating with other

Federal funding sources, such as FEMA; and allocating the remaining funds for each of these programs within a week of receipt of this letter.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Joe Carlile with Chairman Price (joseph.carlile@mail.house.gov) or Doug Disrud with Ranking Member Diaz-Balart (doug.disrud@mail.house.gov).

Sincerely,



David E. Price, Chairman
United States House Appropriations
Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing
and Urban Development, and
Related Agencies



Mario Diaz-Balart, Ranking Member
United States House Appropriations
Subcommittee on Transportation,
Housing and Urban Development, and
Related Agencies