



April 20, 2018

Dear Senator Feinstein, Senator Harris, House Majority Leader McCarthy, House Minority Leader Pelosi, and Representatives Aguilar, Barragan, Bass, Bera, Brownley, Calvert, Carbajal, Cardenas, Chu, Cook, Correa, Costa, Davis, Denham, DeSaulnier, Eshoo, Garamendi, Gomez, Huffman, Hunter, Issa, Khanna, Knight, LaMalfa, Lee, Lieu, Lofgren, Lowenthal, Matsui, McClintock, McNerney, Napolitano, Nunes, Panetta, Peters, Rohrabacher, Roybal-Allard, Royce, Ruiz, Sanchez, Schiff, Sherman, Speier, Swalwell, Takano, Thompson, Torres, Valadao, Vargas, Walters, and Waters:

As leaders in California's healthcare safety net and providers of healthcare, behavioral health, and supportive housing for California's most vulnerable residents, we recognize that safe, decent, affordable housing provides a critical foundation for the health and wellbeing of the people we serve, including children, seniors, people with disabilities, and people who experience homelessness. Here in California we are engaged in cross-sector partnerships to invest in housing. We have been making important progress linking health services and housing opportunities for people who face the greatest health-related risks and challenges, in coordinated efforts to reduce avoidable hospitalizations and other costs for crisis care, and to improve the health of people and communities in our state.

We are writing to urge you to support adequate federal funding to provide rental assistance to people with the lowest incomes, including full funding in HUD's budget at the level needed to renew all Housing Choice Vouchers, as you take action on spending for the upcoming fiscal year.

Federal support for affordable rental housing for low-income people is an essential component of our efforts to make effective use of the resources in our local health care delivery systems to improve the health and well-being of the most vulnerable people we serve.

- Housing assistance for seniors and people with disabilities helps to reduce extended hospital stays and nursing home care and reduces hardships for seniors and people with disabilities who are living on fixed incomes.
- For people with complex health needs who experience homelessness, supportive housing reduces emergency room visits and hospitalizations and improves medication compliance, participation in follow-up medical visits and treatment completion.
- Housing vouchers protect children from hardship, improving their chance to succeed in school and live healthy lives. For children and their families, access to deeply affordable housing dramatically improves housing stability and food security while reducing the

reliance on foster care placements, exposure to domestic violence, and other adverse childhood experiences that have lifetime impacts on health.

California health plans and hospital systems recognize the importance of housing as a social determinant of health. California is implementing innovative approaches to Whole Person Care and preparing to implement Health Homes Program services, using funding through its Medi-Cal program to pay for supportive services for people with complex needs, including people experiencing homelessness.

These services are helping people find homes and get connected to the care they need, but Medicaid (Medi-Cal) funding cannot be used to pay rent. These promising program initiatives are relying on federal housing vouchers as part of the cross-sector partnerships necessary to achieve better results for the people and communities we serve. We urge you to support adequate funding in HUD's budget for the voucher program.

Should you have any questions, please contact Housing California's Executive Director, Lisa Hershey, at lhershey@housingca.org.

Sincerely,

Alameda Alliance for Health
Alameda Health System
Anthem Blue Cross
California Association of Public Hospitals
Central California Alliance for Health
Corporation for Supportive Housing
HealthRight 360
Housing California

Dignity Health
Inland Empire Health Plan
Kaiser Permanente
L.A. Care Health Plan
Lifelong Medical Care
Partnership HealthPlan of California
Abode Services