

Dear Chairman Hensarling,

Thank you for undertaking this ambitious analysis of the Department of Housing and Urban Development in its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Throughout the past five decades, HUD has provided critically needed services to Americans, administered by dedicated public servants.

The National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (NAHRO) is a professional organization representing many of these public servants- over 20,000 housing and community development agencies and officials across the country. Our members own or manage 674,000 units of public housing (a vast majority of the nation's housing inventory), 174,000 units of tenant-based Section 8 housing and 285,500 units of other assisted housing. NAHRO members also oversee more than \$1.5 billion in Community Development Block Grant and HOME funding to their communities. In all, NAHRO members provide housing for more than 7.9 million low-income people.

NAHRO members face many challenges administering HUD programs; the biggest by far is years of chronic underfunding. While we understand that the Financial Services Committee has no jurisdiction over the budget and appropriations, it is important to consider this context in any analysis of HUD programs. Without full funding of HUD programs for an extended length of time, it is impossible to accurately gauge the impact of housing assistance on eliminating poverty in America.

Another challenge faced by NAHRO members is the burdensome level of regulations, many of which are duplicitous, outdated and unnecessary. This is compounded by budget cuts that have reduced administrative fees paid to housing authorities by HUD to historically low levels, severely limiting staff resources and capacity. NAHRO has encouraged HUD to streamline, reduce, and balance these regulations when possible and prudent. We ask that the committee consider its options to help balance this overwhelming burden on housing authorities, including passage of the Small Housing Authority Reform Proposal (SHARP) to provide relief to small agencies that feel the regulatory burden more acutely than their larger counterparts and a broad-based expansion of the Moving to Work program that provides agencies with flexibility and the freedom to pursue innovative policies that are driven by local needs.

These challenges and recommendations are more thoroughly discussed in the attached document, NAHRO's Legislative and Regulatory Agenda for 2015.

As our members have learned through administering these important programs, HUD provides an essential service that helps many of our fellow citizens in their most critical times of need that cannot be replicated at the same scale by state or local governments. America should take seriously its commitment to a national housing policy and provide HUD the resources, both financial and statutory, that it needs to ensure every American has access to housing that is affordable to them.

Thank you for taking the time to consider our recommendations. Please contact John Bohm with any questions or comments at [jbohm@nahro.org](mailto:jbohm@nahro.org) or 202-580-7215.

Sincerely,

Saul Ramirez  
CEO  
NAHRO