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HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
APPROPRIATIONS
SENIOR WHIP

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
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February 16, 2024

The Honorable Marcia L. Fudge
Secretary of the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
451 7th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20410

Dear Secretary Fudge,

Thank you for your historic and continued leadership and envisioning a strategic plan for the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) that prioritizes creating strong, sustainable, inclusive communities and quality affordable homes for all. We applaud your steadfast commitment to putting an end to discriminatory practices in the housing market and ensuring that fair housing rules are upheld. Despite the incredible strides our nation has made since the Fair Housing Act was signed into law in 1968, there are still grave injustices – particularly concerning equitable access to affordable, safe, and stable housing. Recent data from a report released in 2023 and co-authored by researchers at the Eviction Lab at Princeton University and the U.S. Census Bureau has revealed some troubling statistics that we would like to bring to your attention.

The report demonstrates that the population facing the threat of eviction is grossly underreported. The court records that we as policymakers regularly rely on to understand eviction patterns often have no information beyond the name and address of the tenant who is filed against, meaning that we cannot directly assess gender or racial/ethnic disparities in eviction risk. Additionally, since the leaseholder is usually the only person listed on eviction filings, this excludes all information on other members of these households facing displacement, including children.

However, this report takes an unprecedented step by linking court records to Census Bureau data, providing the most comprehensive description to date of U.S. renters facing eviction. The results show that there are not only significant racial disparities in eviction filings, but also that 2.9 million children are affected by an eviction annually—with the typical eviction case involving one child.¹ Indeed, the report finds that eviction rates during childhood are higher than at any other age. Shockingly, although Black Americans only make up 18.6% of all renters in the United States, over half (51.1%) of those affected by eviction are Black. Fully one in every five Black American renters will be threatened with eviction every year. The data also revealed a stark gender disparity in the risk of being filed against, leaving female renters—especially Black women—at increased risk of carrying the “scarlet E” of an eviction case on their record, damaging their prospects of finding safe, secure housing in future.

Due to this data, we would like to request information answering the following questions:

¹ The report finds that eviction rates for households including children are routinely double those for households without children.

- (1) Given that this report provides evidence of disparate impact of eviction among three classes protected by the Fair Housing Act—Black renters, women, and households with children—what steps can HUD take to investigate and explore remedies?
- (2) This report makes clear that, when accounting for eviction, the number of unstably housed children potentially eligible for assistance through the McKinney-Vento Homelessness Assistance Act is far greater than previously estimated.² How can HUD target available resources to families with children to ensure their safe, stable housing? What steps will the Department take to encourage local partners—including courts and school districts—to further this goal?
- (3) The report also finds that nearly 170,000 seniors face the risk of eviction every year. What is HUD’s role to ensure the stable housing of the growing population of older renters?
- (4) In response to previous Congressional requests, HUD has produced reports on the feasibility of tracking evictions from federally assisted housing and on creation of a national evictions database.³ Do you have an official position on pursuing either or both of these options?

As always, we appreciate your continuous time and effort addressing these issues. We respectfully request to hear back from your office within the next 30 days on these questions and we look forward to working with you to address the issue together.

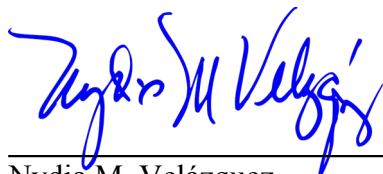
Sincerely,



Bonnie Watson Coleman
Member of Congress



Katie Porter
Member of Congress



Nydia M. Velázquez
Member of Congress



Barbara Lee
Member of Congress

² Previous research on housing instability among children has primarily focused on the prevalence of homelessness, with estimates of 1.27 million homeless children enrolled in public schools in the academic year 2019 to 2020

³ Office of Policy Development & Research. 2021a. *Congressional Report on Tracking Data on Evictions from Federally Assisted Housing for House Report 116-106*; Office of Policy Development & Research. 2021b. *Report to Congress on the Feasibility of Creating a National Evictions Database*.

Suzanne Bonamici

Suzanne Bonamici
Member of Congress

Troy A. Carter, Sr.

Troy A. Carter, Sr.
Member of Congress

Nikema Williams

Nikema Williams
Member of Congress

Becca Balint

Becca Balint
Member of Congress

Danny K. Davis

Danny K. Davis
Member of Congress

Shri Thanedar

Shri Thanedar
Member of Congress

Hank Johnson

Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.
Member of Congress

Donald M. Payne, Jr.

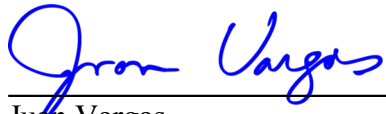
Donald M. Payne, Jr.
Member of Congress

Delia C. Ramirez

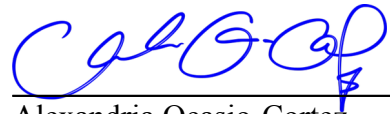
Delia C. Ramirez
Member of Congress

Eleanor H. Norton

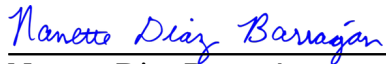
Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress



Juan Vargas
Member of Congress



Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez
Member of Congress



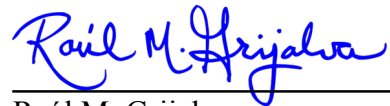
Nanette Diaz Barragán
Member of Congress



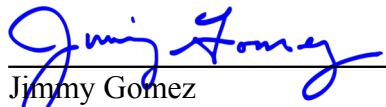
Andy Kim
Member of Congress



Stacey E. Plaskett
Member of Congress



Raúl M. Grijalva
Member of Congress



Jimmy Gomez
Member of Congress



Ilhan Omar
Member of Congress



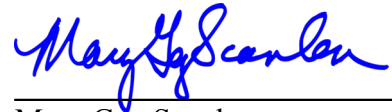
Sheila Jackson Lee
Member of Congress



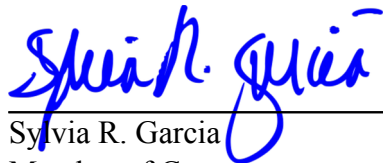
Valerie P. Foushee
Member of Congress



Cori Bush
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Mary Gay Scanlon
Member of Congress



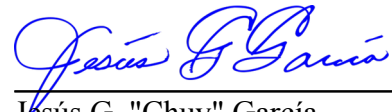
Sylvia R. Garcia
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Gwen S. Moore
Member of Congress



Maxwell Alejandro Frost
Member of Congress



Jesús G. "Chuy" García
Member of Congress



Jamaal Bowman, Ed.D.
Member of Congress



Betty McCollum
Member of Congress



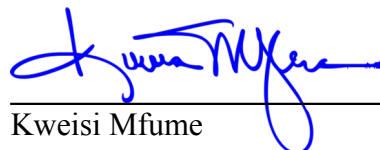
Pramila Jayapal
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Emilia Strong Sykes
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Lauren Underwood
Member of Congress



Kweisi Mfume
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Dan Goldman
Member of Congress



James P. McGovern
Member of Congress



Adriano Espaillat
Member of Congress



Rashida Tlaib
Member of Congress



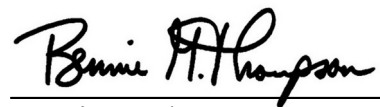
André Carson
Member of Congress



Yvette D. Clarke
Member of Congress



Jan Schakowsky
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Bennie G. Thompson
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Frederica S. Wilson

Frederica S. Wilson
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Greg Casar
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Ayanna S. Pressley

Ayanna Pressley
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Kevin Mullin

Kevin Mullin
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