

October 28, 2021

The Honorable Brian Schatz  
United States Senate  
722 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Susan Collins  
United States Senate  
413 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Schatz and Ranking Member Collins,

Thank you for your ongoing support of HUD's Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) program. Your leadership has been crucial as our coalition works to expand this vastly underutilized program.

FSS is one of the most powerful tools available to support families with low incomes – many of whom have been severely impacted by the economic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic – to increase their financial security and build the savings necessary to be able to weather future economic challenges.

The capacity for the program to grow to serve more families is contingent on funding allocated in the Transportation-HUD appropriations bill, for which the Senate has proposed allocating \$120 million in FY22. More eligible households ought to have the opportunity to participate in FSS, both within the Public Housing and Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) programs, as well as at properties with Project-Based Rental Assistance (PBRA) contracts. **We strongly urge you to adopt the House's allocation of \$150 million for FSS in upcoming conference discussions.**

There is a growing body of evidence – including new research released last month – that well-run FSS programs with a focus on asset building effectively support families to increase their earnings, build financial security, and reach their financial goals. And, with increased funding, we can continue to harness FSS as a tool to narrow racial and gender wealth divides and bring about broader, lasting change in our national approach to poverty.

**We also urge you to adopt the House's language on performance standards in the final legislation.** The Senate language prohibits use of performance metrics in the process of allocating coordinator funds, but we believe that HUD's consideration of performance measures when determining funding awards is central to the expansion of high-performing FSS programs.

Our coalition also supports the House's language that affirms the eligibility of properties with PBRA contracts to receive FSS coordinator funding. Forthcoming research on some of the very first FSS programs to be launched in the PBRA market provides early, promising evidence that these programs can also support participants to increase their earnings and increase their financial security, consistent with the results seen in well-run PH and HCV FSS programs. Eligibility to apply for a portion of increased coordinator funding will enable PBRA owners to expand existing and launch new programs to reach more eligible families. **We urge you to adopt the House's language on PBRA eligibility for FSS coordinator funding in the final legislation.**

Our sincere gratitude for your continued support of the FSS program and for your efforts to broaden its scope and impact to benefit more families than ever before. Please contact Jimmy Stuart at [jstuart@compassworkingcapital.org](mailto:jstuart@compassworkingcapital.org) or 857-317-3283 if you have any questions or need additional information.

Sincerely,

American Association of Service Coordinators

Baltimore Regional Housing Partnership

Boston Housing Authority

The Caleb Group

The Community Builders

Community Health Councils

Compass Working Capital

Housing Authority City of Fort Myers

Housing Partnership Network

Local Initiatives Support Corporation

Massachusetts Association of Community Development Corporations

Mercy Housing

National Affordable Housing Management Association

National Association of Housing & Redevelopment Officials (NAHRO)

National Housing & Rehabilitation Association

National Leased Housing Association

Piedmont Housing Alliance

Preservation of Affordable Housing (POAH)

Rockville Housing Enterprises

Stewards of Affordable Housing for the Future (SAHF)

Winn Companies

Sue Ouellette, FSS Program Coordinator