

July 1, 2016

Dear Chairman Hatch and Ranking Member Wyden:

We write to register the strong support of the nation's mayors for consideration and quick passage of S. 2962, the Affordable Housing Credit Improvement Act to reform the low-income housing tax credit. This bipartisan legislation currently under consideration in your Committee would help strengthen and expand the highly successful Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) Program by 50 percent, and help create or preserve over 1.3 million affordable homes throughout the country over the next decade.

As leaders of cities whose residents are facing one of the worst housing crises in our nation's history, we know that access to safe and affordable housing is essential for the health and well-being of our residents and the economic strength of our communities. An unprecedented 11 million renter households – more than one in four of all renters in the U.S. – spend more than half of their monthly income on rent. With that cost burden, there is very little left for other necessities, such as food, healthcare, education and transportation to employment. The LIHTC has long been seen as one of the most effective and critical tools available to address rental housing shortages and increase access to affordable housing.

Strong federal leadership in partnership with our cities is critical to addressing the housing needs in our communities. A 50 percent expansion of the 9 percent LIHTC allocation will provide a crucial resource to support the creation or preservation of an estimated 400,000 additional affordable rental units over the next ten years. The legislation also includes an important option for income averaging for both the 4 percent and 9 percent credits, which will allow developers to serve a wider band of people across the income spectrum. Many low and moderate income families miss out on the opportunity to secure much needed affordable housing due to the very narrow income bands prescribed in the current program.

Importantly, the LIHTC Program also harnesses the private market in support of the public good and is one of the most effective tools for public-private partnerships in housing. Developers compete to be awarded credits for their housing projects, and then sell the credits to investors to raise equity. These public-private partnerships drive our economies and benefit the whole income spectrum of residents—from the most vulnerable formerly homeless, to seniors, to working families priced out of high-cost rentals.

Further, the tax credit is an important job creator, generating approximately \$7.1 billion in economic income and roughly 96,000 jobs per year across many industries.

This legislation has broad support and is important to our cities, our residents, and our nation. We urge your committee to pass S. 2962, the Affordable Housing Credit Improvement Act expeditiously.

Sincerely,

Mayor Ed Murray  
Seattle, Washington

Mayor Steve Adler  
Austin, Texas

Mayor Jackie Biskupski  
Salt Lake City, Utah

Mayor Eric Garcetti  
Los Angeles, California

Mayor Charlie Hales  
Portland, Oregon

Mayor Betsy Hodges  
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Mayor Sly James  
Kansas City, Missouri

Mayor Jeri Muoio  
West Palm Beach, Florida

Mayor Mike Rawlings  
Dallas, Texas

Mayor Jonathan Rothschild  
Tucson, Arizona

Mayor Tony Vazquez  
Santa Monica, California

Mayor Bill de Blasio  
New York City, New York

Mayor Luke Bronin  
Hartford, Connecticut

Mayor Michael Coleman  
St. Paul, Minnesota

Mayor John Giles  
Mesa, Arizona

Mayor Michael Hancock  
Denver, Colorado

Mayor Daniel Horrigan  
Akron, Ohio

Mayor Ed Lee  
San Francisco, California

Mayor Bill Peduto  
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Mayor Stephanie Rawling-Blake  
Baltimore, Maryland

Mayor Marilyn Strickland  
Tacoma, Washington

Mayor Marty Walsh  
Boston, Massachusetts