



March 12, 2019

The Honorable John Barrasso
Chairman
Senate Committee on Environment and Public
Works
410 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, District of Columbia 20510

The Honorable Tom Carper
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Environment and
Public Works
456 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, District of Columbia 20510

The Honorable Peter DeFazio
Chairman
House Committee on Transportation and
Infrastructure
2164 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, District of Columbia 20515

The Honorable Sam Graves
Ranking Member
House Committee on Transportation and
Infrastructure
2165 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, District of Columbia 20515

Dear Chairman Barrasso, Ranking Member Carper, Chairman DeFazio, and Ranking Member Graves:

Infrastructure continues to be a critical issue for our country's future. Unfortunately, we are falling further behind in repairs and improvements to support our communities and economy. The American Society of Civil Engineers has given U.S. infrastructure a D+ grade in its *2017 Infrastructure Report Card*. Across the nation, deficiencies in transportation networks, water and wastewater systems, public facilities, energy grids, and solid waste centers cost Americans billions of dollars per year. Congress recently hosted a series of hearings presenting witness testimony on challenges presented by failing infrastructure. The message is clear: action is needed now to address the backlog of trillions in infrastructure needs.

Although various paths exist, common goals remain to address widespread infrastructure problems: leveraging of non-federal funding, ensuring accountability, and promoting sustainable and meaningful projects. One particular agency offers credible background on infrastructure development, delivering results aligned with these goals: the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). HUD supports economic and social needs of low-income and vulnerable populations. To accomplish this, the agency leads programs aimed not only at safe and quality housing, but community-wide infrastructure as well. These initiatives have translated into significant and long-term benefits on local and regional levels.

One of HUD's strongest and most successful forms of assistance in infrastructure development is the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. The program affords local governments the ability to invest federal funds to assist low-to-moderate income populations,

improve slum and blighted conditions, and respond to urgent needs. Most CDBG resources target infrastructure projects. In Fiscal Year (FY) 2017, **\$1.9 billion or 62% of its program funding** was dedicated to infrastructure developments. Again for FY2018, **nearly \$2 billion or 59% of program resources** went towards infrastructure. As a result, CDBG provides a tremendous return on investment with **every dollar of federal money leveraging \$4.09 in private and other public funding**.

CDBG is an infrastructure program and stands prepared to facilitate large-scale federal action. The nationwide network of local and state CDBG stakeholders will be an invaluable resource on community-based project development and engagement. As proposals are being considered, members of the CDBG Coalition are available for additional input and assistance as well. Our group is ready and looks forward to working with Congress on this priority.

Sincerely,

American Planning Association
Council of Large Public Housing Authorities
Council of State Community Development Agencies
Enterprise Community Partners
Feeding America
Habitat for Humanity International
Heartland Alliance
International Code Council
International Economic Development Council
National Association for County Community and Economic Development
National Association for Latino Community Asset Builders
National Association of Counties
National Association of Development Organizations
National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials
National Association of Local Housing Finance Agencies
National Association of Regional Councils
National Community Development Association
National Governors Association
National League of Cities
National Main Street Center
National NeighborWorks Association
National Recreation and Park Association
National Rural Water Association
National Urban League
Rebuilding Together
Rural Community Assistance Partnership
The Trust for Public Land
U.S. Conference of Mayors
YWCA USA