

August 5, 2021

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Chairman
Senate Appropriations Committee
S-128 Capitol Building
Washington, District of Columbia 20510

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Vice Chairman
Senate Appropriations Committee
S-128 Capitol Building
Washington, District of Columbia 20510

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Chairwoman
House Appropriations Committee
H-307 Capitol Building
Washington, District of Columbia 20515

The Honorable Kay Granger
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Committee
H-307 Capitol Building
Washington, District of Columbia 20515

The Honorable Brian Schatz
Chairman
Senate Appropriations Transportation-Housing
and Urban Development Subcommittee
S-146A, The Capitol
Washington, District of Columbia 20510

The Honorable Susan Collins
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Transportation-Housing
and Urban Development Subcommittee
186 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, District of Columbia 20510

The Honorable David Price
Chairman
House Appropriations Transportation-Housing
and Urban Development Subcommittee
2358-A Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, District of Columbia 20515

The Honorable Mario Diaz-Balart
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Transportation-Housing
and Urban Development Subcommittee
2358-A Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, District of Columbia 20515

Dear Chairman Leahy, Vice Chairman Shelby, Chairwoman DeLauro, Ranking Member Granger, Chairman Schatz, Ranking Member Collins, Chairman Price, and Ranking Member Diaz-Balart:

In response to several natural disaster events from 2011 to 2013, Congress approved supplemental funding under [Public Law 113-2](#) enacted on January 29, 2013. Federal resources were necessary following the devastating impact of Hurricane Sandy as well as flooding and wildfires throughout the country. A [total of \\$15.1 billion](#) was directed to state and local governments for disaster recovery efforts via U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Community Development Block Grants (HUD - CDBG); within this amount, HUD provided nearly \$1 billion in recovery and resiliency activities under the [National Disaster Resilience Program](#). Relief aid has supported rebuilding efforts leading to stronger and more resilient infrastructure to prevent further damage to homes and communities. While resources have made a significant difference, more

work is left to be done. When Congress approved funding under PL 113-2, a deadline was installed which allowed funds to be expended until September 30, 2022. Even with a short-term allowance of an additional year (provided under [PL 116-260, Sec. 1301](#)) and funds now expiring in September 2023, it is unclear if resources will be fully expended by this date. We request final adoption of the provision included in the House's FY2022 THUD appropriations legislation ([H.R.4502](#)), Section 237 of General Provisions – Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Historically, disaster recovery programs have experienced significant delays due to extensive activities involved with program administration. Intensive planning is required which consists of substantial stakeholder engagement, data availability, and determination of need and response. Further, project development must meet varying federal requirements including labor and environmental standards; unfortunately, HUD programs exist singular in this respect without the ability to align and overlap with processes of other federal agencies. Federal permitting through the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is also an extensive process which takes considerable time. Specific to DR and MIT funds, the bulk of resources were not made available until 2015 as HUD developed programs and grants were distributed to recipients. New programs also had to be established in many state and localities which had never received HUD disaster recovery funds. As many grantees experienced, disaster recovery aid requires capacity-building and resource development unlike any other federal grant.

The emergence of COVID in 2020 and lingering effects of the pandemic have also created new challenges for recovery efforts. The market remains upended in the housing and construction industry. Demand has shifted causing limited availability of contractors and materials across the country. As a result, disaster recovery grantees are experiencing extended timelines and increased costs on projects.

Despite obstacles, state and local disaster relief efforts have remained successful. Homes, businesses, and communities have been supported due to the delivery of the 2013 appropriations. As grantees continue this critical work, additional time is necessary in order to remain accountable and responsive to the total amount of federal recovery aid provided by P.L 113-2. We encourage Congress to update the expenditure deadline for 2013 HUD disaster supplemental funding in a final annual appropriations bill.

Please reach out if you have questions regarding this request. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dianne E. Taylor". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dianne E. Taylor
Executive Director