

May 12, 2021

President Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Biden,

Thank you for including substantial funding for affordable housing and home and community-based services in your FY 2022 Budget Request and American Jobs Plan. Like you, we believe every American should have access to affordable housing and supportive services in their community. Investing in affordable housing and community-based services will lay the foundation for better health outcomes for vulnerable populations, advance health equity for underserved and marginalized communities, and mitigate the risks of unnecessary institutionalization. At the same time, certain populations will still face barriers to accessing the housing and services unless specific actions are taken by Congress and the Administration to remove these barriers.

People with complex care needs often cannot navigate the administrative processes required to find and access quality healthcare and supportive services. Lack of services coordination at the state and local levels only exacerbates the problem. Healthcare providers are usually not equipped to partner with other service providers (housing, nutrition, employment, financial, etc.) to address the wide range of social factors influencing health. Community-based organizations that have the skills and service network may not have the capacity to support all of the people in need of services. Forward thinking health systems have begun collaborating with housing systems for better system integration, but their impact has been too confined to specific service offerings and service areas to effect broader systemic change. State and local government and community-based organizations need to build capacity to collaborate effectively across systems. They need to integrate systems and make systems more adaptive to the needs of individuals over time. But they need resources to do all of this.

We urge the Administration to take the following immediate actions to improve access to comprehensive home and community-based services for all populations:

1. Allocate funds for building the capacity of state, local, and Tribal governments and community-based organizations to develop and sustain integrated adaptive person-centered service delivery systems.
2. Enact the HCBS Access Act and make housing support services available to all people experiencing housing instability or homelessness regardless of HCBS enrollment status.
3. Ensure there is adequate affordable housing stock in rural and urban areas for people with complex health needs who are at-risk of institutionalization or homelessness (ie, permanent supportive housing).
4. Create a flexible services fund which pays for home and community-based services not billable to Medicaid.

5. Increase the federal matching percentage to 100 percent for state Medicaid programs that demonstrate successful alignment of home and community-based services as expanded by the flexible services fund to housing support services such as permanent supportive housing, housing vouchers, and tenancy support services.
6. Require state Medicaid plans to center racial equity in program design and impact/outcome assessments.
7. Evaluate health outcomes in states that have successfully coordinated delivery of Medicaid home and community-based services, flex services, and housing support services.

We respectfully request that you consider these seven recommendations as you finalize your FY 2022 budget and develop your implementation strategy for the American Jobs Plan. These recommendations will make these transformational investments even more impactful for underserved and unserved populations.

Sincerely,

Organizations listed in alphabetical order (as of May 12, 2021)

AIDS Alabama
AIDS Foundation Chicago
All Home CA
America Forward
Arizona Housing Coalition
Association for Individual Development (AID)
Avalon Housing
Build Healthy Places Network
Callen-Lorde Community Health Center
Camden Coalition of Healthcare Providers
CANI-PAC
Cardea Health
Child Welfare League of America
Coalition On Homelessness and Housing In Ohio
Community Collaborative Group, LLC
Community Oriented Correctional Health Services (COCHS)
Community Solutions
Complete 360 LRCO
CSH
DESC
Downtown Women's Center
Englewood CDC
Episcopal Community Services of San Francisco
Fundors Together to End Homelessness
Georgia Supportive Housing Association, Inc.
Harrisonburg RHA
Hathaway Sycamores
Haven's House Youth Services

Home Forward
Housing Association of Nonprofit Developers (HAND)
Imagine LA
Lafayette Transitional Housing Center
Lutheran Child and Family Services
Mental Health America of West Central Indiana
National Alliance to End Homelessness
National Low Income Housing Coalition
Native American Connections
New Courtland
People Assisting The Homeless
Piedmont Housing Alliance
Portsmouth Area Resources Coalition, Inc.
Renew Indianapolis
San Francisco AIDS Foundation
Shopworks Architecture
SMI Enterprises LLC
South Bay Coalition to End Homelessness (Los Angeles County)
South Bend Heritage Foundation, Inc.
St. Catherine's Center For Children
St. Joseph Center
Supportive Housing Providers Association
The Arc of the United States
The NOAH Project
The People Concern
The Planning Council
The Teen Project
Thrive Alliance
Truman Medical Center Behavioral Health
Union Station Homeless Services
United Way of Greater LA
United Way of Massachusetts Bay and Merrimack Valley
United Way of the Wabash Valley
Virginia Housing Alliance
Youth Collaboratory