TRANSPORTATION AND HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2012

U.S. SENATE,
SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS,
Washington, DC.

NONDEPARTMENTAL WITNESSES

[The following testimonies were received by the Subcommittee on Transportation and Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies for inclusion in the record. The submitted materials relate to the fiscal year 2012 budget request for programs within the subcommittee's jurisdiction.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE AMERICAN PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION ASSOCIATION

INTRODUCTION

Mr. Chairman and members of the subcommittee, on behalf of the American Public Transportation Association (APTA), I thank you for this opportunity to submit written testimony on the fiscal year 2012 Transportation and Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies appropriations bill as it relates to Federal investment in public transportation and high-speed and intercity passenger rail (HSIPR).

APTA's highest priority is the enactment of a well-funded, 6-year, multimodal surface transportation authorization bill, as it is one of the most important actions the Congress can take to improve mobility for our citizens and put our Nation's economic engine into high gear. We recognize the challenge that the absence of an authorization bill places on the Appropriations Committee, yet we must stress the tremendous needs that persist for public transportation agencies throughout the country. A strong commitment to investment in our transportation infrastructure remains essential to the Nation's economic prosperity and fiscal health. Failure to invest will force private sector businesses in the transit industry and other industries to lay off employees and to invest overseas. For the Nation's tens of millions of transit riders, it will mean less service, fewer travel options, higher costs, and longer commutes.

OVERVIEW OF FISCAL YEAR 2012 FUNDING REQUESTS

The fiscal year 2012 Obama administration budget requests $22.4 billion for public transportation programs, and $8.3 billion for HSIPR. This includes a one-time, upfront investment of $11.5 billion for the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) programs and the first installment of the administration's $53 billion 6-year proposal for high-speed and intercity rail investment.

APTA strongly supports the President's proposed public transportation budget request. APTA's authorization recommendations, which had assumed enactment of authorizing legislation 2 years ago, proposed a Federal transit investment of $17.9 billion in fiscal year 2012. APTA urges the Congress to resist efforts to make further cuts to general fund components of the Federal transit program, such as Capital Investment Grants and research, as these are important elements of Federal surface transportation investment. We are most disappointed with the severity of cuts in the Full-Year Continuing Appropriations Act for fiscal year 2011, as the need for these investments is only growing, and the costs associated with these investments will be greater in future years.

Our funding request continues to be instructed by APTA's recommendations for surface transportation authorization and the estimated Federal funding growth required to meet at least 50 percent of the $59.2 billion in annual capital needs by the end of the authorization period. These levels are intended to support a projected doubling of transit ridership over the next 20 years. The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials agrees with APTA's estimate, stating in its "Bottom Line Report for Transportation—2009" that "if transit ridership grows yearly by 3.5 percent, investment would have to increase to $59 billion annually." It is important that steady and growing investment continue despite economic or fiscal situations, as demand and long-term planning requirements for transportation investment continue as well.

APTA strongly opposes the elimination of prior-year HSIPR funding. These funds are needed to ensure that the 32 States and the District of Columbia which are forging ahead with planning and implementing HSIPR improvements can continue their efforts to modernize and expand our Nation's passenger rail services.

Finally, we encourage the Congress to fund the Rail Safety Technology Grants program (section 105) of the Rail Safety Improvement Act (RSIA) at a level significantly higher than the $50 million annual authorization, to assist with the implementation of congressionally mandated positive train control (PTC) systems. The federally imposed deadline for implementation of PTC systems is rapidly approaching, and neither the Congress nor the administration is proposing to put the necessary funding behind this safety priority.

THE NEED FOR FEDERAL TRANSIT INVESTMENT

In previous testimony to this subcommittee, I have presented the case for increasing Federal investment in public transportation. APTA has recommended $123 billion of transit investment over 6 years, and President Obama has proposed $119 billion in the same period. In either scenario, new Federal investment would produce much-needed progress toward bringing our Nation's public transportation infrastructure up to a state of good repair, improving safety, and building the capacity for millions of new riders who will want quality transit service in the coming years. The Department of Transportation (DOT) estimates that a one-time investment of more than $78 billion is needed to bring transit infrastructure up to a state of good repair, and this does not include annual costs to maintain and preserve the existing system. Research on transit needs shows that capital investment from all sources—Federal, State, and local—should be doubled if we are to prepare for future ridership demands.

I want to stress that the demand for public transportation and the need for Federal leadership will not diminish in the months and years ahead. As gasoline prices continue to increase, Americans are turning to public transportation in record numbers, just as they did in 2008 when gas reached an average price of $4.11 per gallon. APTA recently completed an analysis that reveals if regular gas prices reach $4 a gallon across the Nation, as many experts have forecast, an additional 670 million passenger trips could be expected, resulting in more than 10.8 billion trips per year, roughly a 6-percent increase. If pump prices jump to $5 a gallon, the report predicts an additional 1.5 billion passenger trips can be expected, resulting in more than 11.6 billion trips per year. And if prices were to soar to $6 a gallon, expectations go as high as an additional 2.7 billion passenger trips, resulting in more than 12.9 billion trips per year. The volatility of the price at the pump is another wake up call for our Nation to address the increasing demand for public transportation services.

FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION PROGRAMS

Capital Investment Grants (New Starts).—The New Starts program is the primary source of Federal investment in the construction or expansion of bus rapid transit projects, heavy and light rail transit systems, and commuter rail systems. Unlike most other FTA programs, the New Starts program is funded from the General Fund, not the Mass Transit Account of the Federal Highway Trust Fund. Funding for New Starts was previously included in funding guarantees for highway and transit programs, and the success of these major, multi-year capital projects requires predictable support by the Congress and FTA. The Congress established Full Funding Grant Agreements to ensure this predictability. A continued commitment to Federal investment will also influence the willingness of private financial markets to fund public transportation projects and it will guarantee that the bond ratings will remain high and interest rates will remain low. Going forward, whether the

New Starts program is funded out of the general fund or from a trust fund, APTA believes that the program should grow at the same rate as the rest of the transit program. New Starts is essential to enhancing our Nation's mobility, accessibility, and economic prosperity while promoting energy conservation and environmental quality.

Formula and Bus and Bus Facilities.—Like other elements of the program, we urge the Congress to grow funding for existing formula programs, including urban and rural formula, small transit intensive cities, fixed guideway modernization, and others at a rate consistent with overall FTA funding. These formula programs address core needs of our public transportation systems, and deserve the continued support of the Congress. In our authorization recommendations, APTA recommends modifying the current Bus and Bus Facilities program to create two separate categories of funding, with 50 percent distributed under bus formula factors, and the remaining 50 percent available under a discretionary program distributed either through congressional direction or a competitive grants process administered by FTA. This is particularly relevant to the consideration of appropriations legislation as we recognize that the Congress will attempt to address the issue of earmarks and discretionary spending accounts. It is important to recognize that certain transit needs like facilities projects, are often larger than an agency's typical formula allotment, and as such, will require discretionary decisionmaking on either the part of the Congress, or the administration, in order to effectively fund such projects.

FEDERAL RAILROAD ADMINISTRATION PROGRAMS

Positive Train Control.—A high priority for APTA within the programs of the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) is the adequate funding of the Railroad Safety Technology Grants Program, section 105 of RSIA of 2008. APTA is very discouraged that the Congress has rescinded fiscal year 2010 appropriations for this program in addition to the possibility of leaving it unfunded in fiscal year 2011. RSIA requires commuter rail operators implement PTC systems by December 31, 2015, and APTA is urging the Congress to increase the authorized levels for implementation of PTC systems required under RSIA. The cost of implementing PTC on public commuter railroads alone is estimated to exceed $2 billion, not including costs associated with acquiring the necessary radio spectrum or the subsequent software and operating expenses. Our Nation's commuter rail systems are committed to complying with the PTC mandate and implementing critical safety upgrades. However, both the costs associated with implementing PTC, as well as the challenges associated with a technology that is still under development, are quite substantial. Full funding will help ensure that these important safety improvements can be implemented within the required timeframe.

High-Speed and Intercity Passenger Rail Investment.—Ridership in the overall passenger rail market in the United States has been steadily growing, with commuter rail being one of the most frequently used methods of public transportation for those traveling from outlying suburban areas to commercial centers of metropolitan areas, often to and from places of employment, education, commerce and medical care. The most recently published APTA public transportation ridership report, which provides data on transit passenger ridership for U.S. transit agencies, shows a continued strong demand for public transportation despite the economic downturn, with nearly 10.2 billion trips taken on public transportation nationally in 2010. The demand for commuter rail service has also remained strong, with 13 of 26 commuter rail systems in operation for all of 2010 reporting ridership increase. Similarly, despite the Nation's slow economy, Amtrak experienced record ridership in the last fiscal year, reporting a ridership increase of 4.6 percent for an overall ridership of more than 28.7 million passengers. As the current political unrest in many oil producing nations continues, more and more commuters are turning to public transportation to escape rising gas prices, and many transit operators are reporting double digit ridership increases this year.

In addition to commuter rail, it is critical that intercity passenger rail become a more useful transportation option for travelers looking for alternatives to high gas prices and congested road and air travel in many corridors. While much attention has been lavished on three Governors who rejected Federal rail funding for their States, 32 other States plus the District of Columbia are forging ahead in planning and implementing rail improvements. Funding from the three States which opted to cancel their HSIPR programs is being redirected by DOT to other HSIPR projects across the country.

CONCLUSION

I thank the subcommittee for allowing me to share APTA's views on fiscal year 2012 public transportation and high-speed and intercity rail appropriations issues. We look forward to working with the subcommittee to make the necessary investments to grow the public transportation program. We urge the subcommittee to invest in making commuter, intercity, and high-speed rail safer by fully appropriating the funds authorized in the RSIA. Finally, we support the efforts of the Congress thus far to invest in a high-speed rail system and encourage your subcommittee to continue support for this effort. This is a critical time for our Nation to continue to invest in transit infrastructure that promotes economic growth, energy independence, and a better way of life for all Americans.

ABOUT APTA

APTA is a nonprofit international association of nearly 1,500 public and private-member organizations, including transit systems and commuter, intercity and high-speed rail operators; planning, design, construction, and finance firms; product and service providers; academic institutions; transit associations and State departments of transportation. APTA members serve the public interest by providing safe, efficient, and economical public transportation services and products. More than 90 percent of the people using public transportation in the United States and Canada are served by APTA-member systems.

Prepared Statement of the Manufactured Housing Association for Regulatory Reform

The Manufactured Housing Association for Regulatory Reform (MHARR) is a national trade association representing the views and interests of producers of manufactured housing. Manufactured housing has historically been the Nation's leading source of affordable, nonsubsidized home ownership. But, the manufactured housing industry is in danger of disappearing, with devastating consequences for affordable housing, employment, and job creation. Over the past decade, manufactured home production has declined by more than 86 percent (from 373,143 units in 1998 to 50,046 in 2010), nearly 75 percent of the industry's production facilities have closed (from 430 to fewer than 110), together with more than 7,500 retail centers, resulting in the loss of more than 200,000 jobs.

The decline of the manufactured housing industry began long before the decline of the broader housing market, and has been much more severe. This disparity is principally a result of two factors. The first is a costly and unjustified expansion of Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) regulation, in the face of rapidly diminishing production. Second, this regulatory expansion, imposed by circumventing or undermining key program reforms mandated by the Congress in the Manufactured Housing Improvement Act of 2000, has ensured the continuing status of manufactured homes as "trailers," fueling discrimination against manufactured homes and manufactured home purchasers.

The HUD program has been able to engage in this unwarranted regulatory expansion because of an artificially inflated budget which has not had adequate oversight either within HUD or by the Congress in recent years. The HUD manufactured housing program was originally conceived as a self-funding program. In fiscal year 2009, HUD, for the first time, sought and received a direct appropriation of $5.4 million in general revenue funds, supposedly as a one-time request, to implement the new Federal installation and alternate dispute resolution (ADR) programs mandated by the 2000 law. In fiscal year 2010, however, HUD requested an additional $9 million direct appropriation. This infusion of millions of dollars in tax funds, though, has not been used to implement the new programs of the 2000 law. Instead, these funds have been used to impose a needless "make-work" regulatory expansion and, with it, an increase in the size of HUD program staff and the duties and functions of its entrenched inspection "monitoring" contractor, all at a time of dramatically reduced production levels, while revenue allocated to the States for consumer protection has been significantly reduced.

Now, in its fiscal year 2012 budget request, despite continued weakness in the manufactured housing market, HUD is seeking $14 million in total program budget authority. This involves yet another $7 million direct appropriation of general revenue funds and an announced label fee increase from $39 to $60 per home section. HUD claims that it needs $3.8 million for an "installation inspect and enforcement" contract and $1.4 million for a "dispute resolution enforcement" contract. These are the same contracts, however, for which HUD requested tax revenues in 2009 and

2010, but did not award, while it used the additional funds provided by the Congress to needlessly expand regulation and program staff, and increase funding for its inspection "monitoring" contractor. In fact, though, there is no legitimate basis for a budget of this size or further infusions of taxpayer dollars when industry production continues to decline and the Federal Government faces a large deficit. Accordingly, the Congress should carefully scrutinize HUD's fiscal year 2012 budget request, as detailed below, based on section 620 of the 2000 law, pertaining to program funding and expenditures.

IMPROPER EXPANSION OF PRODUCTION REGULATION

Section 620(a)(1)(A) of the 2000 law provides for the use of the authorized fee paid by manufacturers to conduct "inspections and monitoring." Section 620(c), however, as amended by the 2000 law, prohibits HUD from using "any fee collected under this section" for "any purpose or activity not specifically authorized by this title."

Section 604(b) of the law specifically requires HUD to bring proposed regulations or amendments to the Manufactured Housing Consensus Committee (MHCC) for consensus review and input, followed by notice and comment rulemaking. Section 604(b)(6) of the 2000 law further requires HUD to bring any change to "policies practices, or procedures relating to . . . inspections, monitoring, or other enforcement activities" to the MHCC for consensus review and input, followed by notice and comment rulemaking. The section further provides that "any change adopted in violation" of its requirements "is void."

Starting in 2008, HUD has systematically imposed on manufacturers a costly de facto expansion of in-plant regulation without complying with the requirements of either section 604(b) generally or section 604(b)(6) specifically. Indeed, HUD, through a February 5, 2010, "interpretive rule," issued with no opportunity for public comment, has effectively read section 604(b)(6) out of the law completely. Absent compliance with section 604(b) and section 604(b)(6), the imposition of this program of de facto expanded regulation and enforcement is not an activity "specifically authorized" by applicable law. As a result, its costs—including additional amounts paid to contractors for inspections, oversight, or enforcement—should not be funded.

INADEQUATE STATE FUNDING

State administrative agencies (SAAs) are the first line of protection for home buyers living in a growing number of both new and existing manufactured homes. The law envisions a Federal-State partnership for the enforcement of the Federal standards. To ensure State participation in this partnership, section 620(a)(1)(B) of the law requires HUD to "provid[e] funding to the States. . . ." The proposed HUD fiscal year 2012 budget, however, as with the last three HUD budgets, keeps funding for the States flat (at approximately one-half the fiscal year 2005 funding level—$3.7 million in 2012, as contrasted with $6.6 million in 2005), while artificially and unnecessarily increasing contractor funding (and program staff), even though the responsibilities of SAAs are more extensive than the monitoring contractor. Thus, at the same time that HUD has artificially inflated the functions performed by its monitoring contractor, HUD is failing to properly fund State participation in the Federal program.

NONCAREER PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR

HUD has refused to appoint a noncareer administrator for the Federal program, maintaining that such an appointment is discretionary under section 620(a)(1). This interpretation of the 2000 law, however, is incorrect. The law, as amended in 2000, grants the Secretary of HUD permissive authority under section 620(a)(1) to establish a "reasonable fee" to fund specific program functions if the Secretary wishes. If such a fee is established, however, as it has been (i.e., the HUD label fee), the use of that fund, to offset expenses in connection with statutory HUD "responsibilities" listed in subsections (620)(a)(1)(A)–(G), is nondiscretionary. Despite this nondiscretionary "responsibility," the HUD manufactured housing program has not had a noncareer administrator since 2004.

UNWARRANTED EXPANSION OF PROGRAM STAFF

Section 620(a)(1)(D) provides for the use of the authorized fee paid by manufacturers to provide "the funding for salaries and expenses of employees of the Department to administer the manufactured housing program." This provision was designed to encourage HUD to use its own employees to carry out most program functions, rather than relying on revenue-driven contractors. Due to HUD's make-work expansion of in-plant regulation, however, HUD has not only increased program staff to 14 employees, its highest level ever, but has also systematically increased the functions of—and payments to—its monitoring contractor, even though manufactured housing production has declined by a factor of more than 86 percent.

MANUFACTURED HOUSING CONSENSUS COMMITTEE

Section 620(a)(1)(E) provides for the use of the authorized fee paid by manufacturers to administer the Manufactured Housing Consensus Committee (MHCC) established by the 2000 law. But the independence, role, and authority of the MHCC are being emasculated by HUD regulators.

Among other things, HUD career regulators:

—have refused to trigger the MHCC consensus process for regulations as required by section 604(b) of the 2000 law;

—have read the "catch-all" provision (section 604(b)(6)) requiring MHCC consideration of all new policies and practices affecting enforcement out of the 2000 law through an "interpretive rule" issued without public comment;

—have improperly taken control of the MHCC's agenda, focus, and procedures;

—have undermined the balance of the MHCC required by law through politicized appointments, by unilaterally selecting the current chairman, by gerrymandering the composition of MHCC subcommittees, and by excluding collective industry representation while appointing four board members and executives of the same consumer group and two former HUD employees/contractors to the committee; and

—have attempted to improperly suppress stakeholder and public participation in MHCC deliberations.

HUD maintains that these restrictions are required by the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), but that statute does not mandate such restrictions, as is demonstrated by a review of the bylaws of other FACA committees. Moreover, FACA, by its express terms, is superseded by contrary provisions in the authorizing legislation for specific advisory committees. In this case, section 604 of the 2000 law specifically describes the role, authority, functions and operation of the MHCC. To the extent that those provisions conflict with FACA, they are controlling.

FAILURE TO ENSURE PARITY OF MANUFACTURED HOUSING

Section 620(a)(1)(F) provides for the use of the fee paid by manufacturers to facilitate "the acceptance of the quality, durability, safety and affordability of manufactured housing within the Department." This provision reflects the over-riding purpose of the 2000 law—to complete the transition of manufactured housing from the "trailers" of the cold war era to legitimate "housing." HUD regulators, however, have not made any effort—known to MHARR—to advance manufactured housing as an equal participant in all HUD housing programs and, by failing to fully and properly implement the 2000 law, continue to treat manufactured homes as "trailers," thus fueling and intensifying discrimination that is crippling the industry.

FAILURE TO PROPERLY IMPLEMENT 2000 LAW PROGRAMS

Section 620(a)(1)(G) provides for the use of the fee paid by manufacturers for "the administration and enforcement" of the Federal installation standards and the Federal dispute resolution system in "default" States that do not adopt their own programs under State law. Under section 605(c)(2)(B) and section 623(c)(12) of the 2000 law, both of these programs were to have been operational by December 2005. Yet, according to the latest information available from HUD, neither has been fully implemented and, to date, no significant implementation contracts have been awarded, even though HUD has included funding for contractors for both programs in its budget requests since at least 2008.

ANNOUNCED LABEL FEE INCREASE—SECTIONS 620(D)–(E)

Section 620(d) of the 2000 law provides that "the amount of any fee collected under this section may only be modified as specifically approved in advance in an annual appropriations Act". Section 620(e)(2) further provides that "amounts from any fee collected under this section shall be available for expenditure only to the extent approved in advance in an annual appropriations Act".

HUD's proposed fiscal year 2012 program budget includes a label fee increase of more than 50 percent—from $39 per section to $60 per section—in addition to an appropriation of general revenue funds in the amount of $7 million. HUD provides no specific justification for a label fee increase of this magnitude, or a $7 million direct appropriation, other than its unsupported assertion that its responsibilities remain unchanged notwithstanding a 48-percent decline in industry production—

and corresponding drop in label fee revenues—just since 2007. The facts, however, do not support this claim. HUD's assertion that its responsibilities remain "unchanged" despite a sharp decline in industry production is unsupportable. In 2007, the industry produced 95,752 HUD Code homes. In 2010, the industry produced 50,046 HUD Code homes. Accordingly, the program's raw oversight burden today is nearly one-half what it was in 2007. This decline should have meant lower program expenditures between 2007 and proposed fiscal year 2012. Instead, the fiscal year 2007 appropriation of $6.510 million grew to $16 million in 2009 and 2010, and now a requested $14 million for fiscal year 2012.

CONCLUSION

For all the above reasons, the Congress should:
—require HUD to appoint a noncareer program administrator;
—require HUD to choose between either a direct appropriation or a label fee increase, but not both; and
—direct HUD to divert funding from expanded staff and contractor functions to provide adequate funding for State participation in the manufactured housing program.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE NATIONAL AIDS HOUSING COALITION

The National AIDS Housing Coalition (NAHC) requests $362 million for the Housing Opportunities for Persons With AIDS (HOPWA) program for fiscal year 2012. NAHC is a national nonprofit membership housing organization founded in 1994 that works to end the HIV/AIDS epidemic by ensuring that persons living with HIV/AIDS have quality, affordable, and appropriate housing. NAHC's members are people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA), service providers, developers, researchers, public health and housing departments, and advocates.

Research findings presented through NAHC's Research Summit Series overwhelmingly confirm that housing is a strategic point of intervention to address HIV/AIDS, homelessness, and the concomitant effects of race and gender, poverty, mental illness, chronic drug use, incarceration, and exposure to trauma and violence. HIV housing interventions are a cost-effective means to prevent new HIV infections, improve HIV health outcomes, reduce mortality, and reduce reliance on other public systems such as expensive emergency and inpatient medical services.

The HOPWA program is relied upon by HIV/AIDS service organizations nationwide to assure that stable, affordable housing and the critical supportive services that help people remain housed is available to those coping with the debilitating and impoverishing effects of HIV/AIDS. HOPWA's hallmark is its flexibility to provide a continuum of housing and housing-related case management and supportive services for low-income individuals living with HIV/AIDS and their families. HOPWA dollars are used for short- and longer-term rents, facility-based assistance as well as limited rent, mortgage, or utility payments that play a critical role in homelessness prevention. HOPWA can also be used for new development and rehabilitation. In the face of shrinking resources, HOPWA's importance to community strategic planning efforts cannot be underestimated—facilitating better coordination of local and private resources and filling gaps in local systems of care to meet housing need among people with HIV/AIDS and their families.

AIDS HOUSING IS CENTRAL FOR HIV/AIDS HEALTH

A now substantial body of research shows that housing status has a direct, independent, and powerful impact on HIV incidence and the health of PLWHA, regardless of demographics, drug use, health and mental health status, or receipt of other services. Housing affects an individual's ability to avoid exposure to HIV; an HIV-positive individual's ability to avoid exposing others to HIV; and the ability to receive and benefit from HIV healthcare. Whatever else makes one vulnerable to HIV infection—homelessness magnifies the risk. Whatever other factors lead to disparities in care—for women; for youth; for sexual minorities; for people of color; for those who experience mental illness, addiction, violence, abuse, or incarceration—housing instability amplifies their vulnerability for poor health outcomes and early death. Research has consistently shown that people without stable housing are significantly more likely to become HIV-infected, they will have limited access to care once they are infected, and they will live less healthy and shorter lives—compared to people just like them who are fortunate enough to have a home.

Recent findings from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) show how that poverty and homelessness contribute to worsening HIV health disparities. CDC surveillance data reveal that at least 2.1 percent of heterosexuals living in high-poverty urban areas in the United States are HIV-positive—an HIV prevalence rate that is more than 20 times greater than the rate among all heterosexuals in the United States (0.1 percent), and that exceeds the 1-percent infection rate that defines a generalized HIV epidemic. Poverty—not race—is the most important demographic factor associated with HIV infection among inner-city heterosexuals. Men and women in low-income neighborhoods who live below the poverty line are twice as likely to have HIV infection as those living above it, and other social factors—including unemployment, low-education level, and housing status—are also independently associated with infection. Within the low-income communities examined, the rate of new HIV infections almost twice as high (1.8 times) for inner-city heterosexuals who had experienced homelessness in the past year, compared to low-income persons with housing.

AIDS HOUSING WORKS TO IMPROVE HEALTH AND REDUCE PUBLIC COSTS

Research also shows that receipt of housing assistance is independently associated over time with reduced HIV risk behaviors, better health outcomes, and sharp reductions in costly emergency and inpatient services. Recent findings from housing-based interventions provide new evidence that housing supports create stability and connection to care for people living with HIV—improving healthcare outcomes, changing the individual behaviors that put people at risk of acquiring HIV infection, and reducing overall public costs.

PLWHA who are unstably housed lack ongoing HIV care and rely more on expensive crisis services including shelters, jails, and avoidable emergency and hospital care. Housing assistance for people with HIV who are homeless improves their health outcomes and dramatically reduces emergency and inpatient health services, criminal justice involvement, and other crisis costs. A recent study funded by the CDC and HUD found that more stable housing for people with HIV reduced emergency medical visits by 35 percent and hospitalizations by 57 percent. Each new HIV infection prevented through more stable housing saves countless life years and more than $300,000 in lifetime medical costs. Indeed, housing assistance for homeless and unstably housed people living with HIV leads to savings in avoidable health services that can more than offset the costs of the housing intervention.

This consistent evidence base supports housing assistance as a cost-effective healthcare intervention for homeless and unstably housed persons with HIV. Action to meet HIV housing needs costs far less than inaction, making HOPWA and other low-income housing programs that serve people living with HIV a wise use of limited public resources.

HOUSING NEED AMONG PEOPLE WITH HIV/AIDS

More than 56,000 people became infected with HIV in the past year in the United States. Experts estimate that more than one-half of PLWHA will need some form of housing assistance during the course of their illness, while national research has shown that housing is the greatest unmet service need for people living with HIV disease. Data indicates that approximately 72 percent of PLWHA have incomes less than $30,000; the number in need is likely to increase proportionally with the weakened economy and sustained high unemployment levels.

In 2011, HOPWA will continue providing housing support for more than 60,000 households in 133 formula-eligible jurisdictions, providing assistance in all 50 States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. Under the current formula configuration, two to five new jurisdictions may become available, from cities diverse as Greenville, South Carolina to Syracuse, New York. In addition, 91 competitive grants are currently operating. The program is tied to positive client outcomes in the 60,699 households served in the current fiscal year, making it possible for assisted individuals to better attend to their health needs, function in their families and society. AIDS housing is a cost-effective way to end homelessness and achieve positive individual and community health outcomes. HUD reports that 94 percent of all HOPWA rental assistance households in a recent program year were able to achieve maximum stability, reducing risks of homelessness, and participating in healthcare.

NAHC recommends a funding level of $362 million, which would permit assistance to an additional 4,800 people with HIV/AIDS in need of housing.

EXAMPLES OF AIDS HOUSING NEED ACROSS THE COUNTRY

AIDS housing need has exploded in virtually every region of the country. Though waiting lists are no longer maintained in many jurisdictions, affordable housing need continues to grow. Below is a snapshot of the number of HOPWA-eligible households with unmet housing needs in cities and states across the country:

City and/or State	No. of HOPWA-eligible households with unmet housing needs
Alabama	3,621
California:	
Los Angeles	> 8,000
San Francisco	13,000
San Jose	279
District of Columbia	>700
Tampa, Florida	285
Honolulu, Hawaii	130
Chicago, Illinois	10,257
Iowa	115
Maine	110
Lowell, Massachusetts	624
Minnesota	309
New York:	
New York City	11,000
Syracuse	103
Columbus, Ohio	115
Oregon	202
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania	6,000
Texas:	
Dallas	617
El Paso	56
Seattle, Washington	425

OTHER LOW-INCOME HOUSING PROGRAMS REMAIN CRUCIAL

Of course, HOPWA will never fully meet the housing need for all those living with HIV/AIDS and their families. AIDS housing providers urge full and adequate funding for the range of low-income housing programs relied upon in the continuum of housing and services for people with HIV/AIDS, including Homeless Assistance Grants, Tenant-Based Rental Assistance, Public Housing, and Section 811 Housing for People with Disabilities, among others.

In conclusion, NAHC urges the subcommittee to fund the HOPWA program at the highest level possible for fiscal year 2011 to accommodate new formula jurisdictions expected to become eligible and to assist existing programs in moving closer to meeting the actual housing needs in their jurisdictions.

NAHC respectfully asks the subcommittee to approve funding of $362 million for the HOPWA program for fiscal year 2012.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF RAILROAD PASSENGERS

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this statement. Thank you also for the positive role that you and your subcommittee have played over the years in providing funding for intercity passenger trains.

Energy-efficient passenger trains are more important than ever as Amtrak ridership continues to rise, along with gasoline prices. Ridership growth is colliding with the realities of a fleet that is too small.

Thus, our key requests for intercity passenger trains for fiscal year 2012 are:

—Full funding of the Obama administration's requested $8 billion for intercity passenger trains, including approximately $4 billion each for network development (capital upgrades to tracks and stations and procurement of new or rebuilt equipment) and for system preservation and renewal. We support this as the baseline for the multi-year commitment as outlined in the administration's budget.

—The bare minimum should be $4.7 billion, comprised of Amtrak's request of $2.2 billion plus the 2010 level at which High Speed and Intercity Passenger Rail (HSIPR) program was funded, $2.5 billion.

We strongly support the Department of Transportation's (DOT) approach in HSIPR grants to the States. We applaud the agreements reached to date with BNSF (Washington State), Norfolk Southern (North Carolina) and Union Pacific (Illinois). We look forward to the early conclusion of agreements with CSX, especially for Virginia and New York.

Failure to meet, at minimum, the funding targets Amtrak identified in its fiscal year 2012 grant and legislative request puts the country close to a no-growth scenario, which would be extremely unfortunate given the likelihood that high gasoline prices are here to stay. "Smart growth" housing, intercity passenger trains, and rail transit have two things in common:

—Both help enable Americans to sustain the highest possible quality of life in a competitive world economy, and to mitigate what The Weekly Standard's Christopher Caldwell called "America's almost unbelievable demand for oil." Caldwell noted that this demand "has led [the United States] to diverge from the rest of the west on energy policy," a polite way of saying that we are headed for trouble if we don't make it possible for more people to burn less oil. (Quotes: Financial Times column, April 2.)

—Demand for both exceeds supply, indicating that the public is ahead of the policymakers and moving faster than the market place can react.

We continue to urge consideration of the use of tax credits and/or asset depreciation benefits to encourage private leasing companies to buy equipment and lease it to States and perhaps Amtrak. This could help reduce the high upfront costs that taxpayer-supported agencies face when procuring new equipment.

As gasoline prices continue their steady upward climb, airfares are at historic highs, and intercity bus service has been dramatically scaled back over the past 4 years, America's growing population is seeking better, more affordable mobility. Amtrak's historically high ridership—even though the railroad's fares are as high as the market can bear, especially on the Northeast corridor—is evidence of this.

The need to maintain mobility for our citizens, bolster our Nation's economic competitiveness and energy efficiency, provide good jobs for Americans, and reduce our transportation system's negative environmental impact all demand that we ramp up investment in modern passenger trains.

The following table, showing 2008 data, comes from the annual Transportation Energy Data Book (Edition 29, released in 2010), published by Oak Ridge National Laboratory under contract to the Department of Energy, at http://cta.ornl.gov/data/chapter2.shtml:

Mode	BTUs[1] per passenger-mile[2]
Amtrak	2,398
Commuter trains	2,656
Certificated air carriers (domestic)	2,995
Cars	3,437
Light trucks (2-axle, 4-tire)	3,641

[1] BTU = British thermal unit.
[2] Passenger-mile = one passenger traveling 1 mile.

The table indicates that Amtrak is 20 percent and 30 percent more energy efficient per passenger-mile, respectively, than airlines and autos. That is true even though Amtrak's fleet averages 37 years old while the airplane and automobile fleet is constantly turning over with energy efficiency generally improving. Thus, the Amtrak 2008 figures understate rail's true potential.

We are disappointed that negotiations between Amtrak and Union Pacific Railroad apparently remain stalled regarding Amtrak's initiative to provide daily service over the entire line between New Orleans and Los Angeles.

We fully support Amtrak's Gateway Tunnel project, which will create a long-overdue expansion in track capacity between New York City and New Jersey, and for the entire Northeast corridor.

We are concerned about the impact of Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act's section 209 which directs States to provide full-operating support for intercity trains whose routes total 750 miles or less. It is important that this not become an obstacle to service continuation. We continue to urge consideration, at least in emergency situations, of allowing Federal support for such routes' continued operation on a 50–50 matching basis, without making Amtrak swallow the difference.

Thank you for considering our views.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE UNIVERSITY CORPORATION FOR ATMOSPHERIC RESEARCH

On behalf of the University Corporation for Atmospheric Research (UCAR), a consortium of 76 research universities that manages the National Center for Atmospheric Research, I submit this written testimony regarding the fiscal year 2012 appropriation for the record of the Senate Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies. I urge the subcommittee to fully fund the fiscal year 2012 $110 million request for the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) program including the ITS Wireless Innovation Initiative. Further, I ask that the subcommittee support $2.87 billion for the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) Facilities and Equipment (F&E) account and $190 million for its Research, Engineering and Development (RE&D) account.

The Department of Transportation (DOT) relies on its partnerships with State DOTs, local transportation agencies, the first responder community, freight community, and the academic community, to meet its mission of ensuring a fast, safe, efficient, accessible, and convenient transportation system that meets our vital national interests and enhances the quality of life of the American people. The academic and research community contributes directly to this mission with applied research and development (R&D) of cutting-edge technologies to move people and shipments safely and expeditiously. Research on the physics of microbursts, for example, has resulted in the development of wind shear detection technologies that, since full implementation, have reduced aircraft crashes caused by downbursts to zero. Applied research is now being conducted on road snow and ice control, aircraft icing, and turbulence, and other weather hazards, resulting in products that are saving industry and States tens of millions of dollars per year and making the traveling public far safer on the roads and in the skies. I urge you to support the requested levels for the following programs:

FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION'S RESEARCH, TECHNOLOGY, AND EDUCATION PROGRAM

Understanding and addressing adverse weather conditions helps to mitigate the impacts of congestion and accidents, and is a high priority for the FHWA. The Research, Technology, and Education Program provides for a comprehensive, nationally coordinated program that will advance DOT organizational goals and accelerate innovation delivery and technology implementation. The request includes $257 million for the following Research and Innovative Technology Administration programs on which I would like to comment.

Intelligent Transportation Systems

Every year, thousands of people are injured or killed in accidents on our Nation's highways because of bad weather and poor road conditions. The consequences go beyond those human costs to include lost productivity to commercial motor vehicle operators and the expense to local governments responsible for clearing accidents and repairing damaged roadways, to say nothing of the inconvenience to motorists.

Because of R&D investments, innovative new wireless technologies will soon allow cars to share with vehicles behind them important safety data such as adverse weather and road conditions. Knowing about icy or foggy road conditions 2 miles ahead, for example, will save lives and keep traffic moving smoothly. DOT's IntelliDrive (recently renamed "Connected Research Vehicle") program is the centerpiece of the DOT ITS 2010–2014 Strategic Research Plan. Intellidrive partners government, industry, academia, and others to specify, develop, and produce the necessary technology to gather and broadcast a car's "heartbeat" continuously, including weather conditions. Road weather-connected vehicle applications are the next generation of applications and services that assess, forecast, and address the impacts of weather on roads, vehicles, and travelers. Such applications will build upon decision support tools currently undergoing development, testing, and deployment such as the Clarus Regional Demonstrations, the Maintenance Decision Support System and Vehicle Data Translator.

To meet its core research and technology transfer mission, I urge you to support the requested fiscal year 2012 amount of $110 million for the FHWA's ITS, including IntelliDrive and its V–V and V–I Communications for Safety program ($43.3 million) and Dynamic Mobility Applications ($14 million). However, I am concerned about the proposed consolidation of Road Weather Research with these larger programs. The risk is that this successful, small program could be seriously compromised. Road Weather Research has been highly leveraged by States and localities to save lives and millions of dollars. I urge you to ensure that at least $5 million for a distinct road weather research program is included as an important safety and mobility R&D topic in the previously mentioned programs. This funding is consistent with the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA–LU).

Intelligent Transportation Systems Wireless Initiative

DOT's ITS program is launching a new research initiative to improve transportation safety, relieve traffic congestion, and enhance productivity. The budget request includes funding for the ITS Wireless Initiative, which will be managed by RITA and funded out of the Miscellaneous Appropriations account. This new program will develop "living laboratories" where innovative wireless communications methods and applications can be developed for eventual deployment. To accomplish its goals, the DOT will leverage the knowledge, expertise, and experience of the research community. I urge you to support the fiscal year 2012 request of $100 million for FHWA's ITS Wireless Initiative.

FAA'S RESEARCH, ENGINEERING, AND DEVELOPMENT

The FAA's fiscal year 2012 budget request supports continued aviation safety and capacity R&D, focusing on critical areas such as turbulence, in-flight icing, storm prediction, oceanic weather, and restricted visibility. For more than two decades, the FAA has funded R&D efforts to improve forecasting of weather affecting aviation.

The fiscal year 2012 request continues important work in current research areas, including aviation weather. This budget supports enhanced Next Generation Air Transportation System (NextGen) R&D efforts in the areas of improved weather information for integration into decisionmaking, weather information for pilots, and environmental research for aircraft technologies and alternative fuels to improve aviation's environmental and energy performance. The following programs can be found within the RE&D section of the fiscal year 2012 FAA budget request:

Weather Program

The goal of the Weather Program is to increase safety and capacity, and to support NextGen. A number of aviation weather research projects are underway, in collaboration with industry representatives, focusing on in-flight icing, turbulence, winter weather, and deicing protocols, thunderstorms, ceiling, and visibility. One example of a system that translates a large amount of weather data into significant safety and delay improvements is the Consolidated Storm Prediction for Aviation (CoSPA). Thunderstorms and winter storms have long been recognized as significant safety hazards, as well as major causes of system delays. Using CoSPA, accurate forecasts of storms can be translated into probable impacts to the system. This allows for improved decisionmaking resulting in improved safety and reduced delays.

I am very concerned that the budget request of $16.4 million will not support the R&D needs of the Weather Program within RE&D. The request for this program is reduced more than 2 percent from the fiscal year 2010 level and is operating at one-half the level of funding appropriated 10 years ago. To address the pressing challenges and to meet the research needs of NextGen, the Weather Program must receive, at a minimum, $18 million for fiscal year 2012.

Weather Technology in the Cockpit

The 2009 crash of an Air France jet over the Atlantic Ocean, killing all 216 passengers and 12 crew members, is very likely an example of the limits of pilots' ability to cope with severe weather. Pilots currently have little weather information as they fly over remote stretches of the ocean where some of the worst turbulence encounters occur. Providing pilots with at least an approximate picture of developing storms could help guide them safely around areas of potentially severe turbulence.

The Weather Technology in the Cockpit Program leverages research activities with other agencies, academia, and the private sector by enabling the adoption of cockpit technologies that provide pilots with hazardous weather information and improve situational awareness.

I am very concerned that the fiscal year 2012 request for this small, but life-saving program within RE&D was reduced by almost 4 percent from fiscal year 2010 levels. I urge you to fund the Weather Technology in the Cockpit program at $10 million, at a minimum.

FAA'S FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT

Delays in the National Airspace System (NAS) are primarily attributable to weather. According to the FAA, during the last 5 years more than 70 percent of delays of 15 minutes or more, on average, were caused by weather. Weather also impacts safety. Between 1994 and 2003, weather was determined to be a contributing factor in more than 20 percent of all accidents. Currently, most operational decision tools do not utilize weather information effectively or at all. Therefore, exploring, identifying, and employing better methods for data collection and communication will help facilitate the flow of operation-specific weather data and information to end users. Within F&E, I would like to call your attention to the following two very important programs:

NextGen Network Enabled Weather.—NextGen Network Enabled Weather (NNEW) is a transformational, multiagency project dedicated to using and developing technologies and standards for NextGen that will support effective dissemination of weather data. NNEW will develop the FAA's portion of the 4–D Weather Data Cube which will provide standardized information from multiple contributors and locations to a variety of end-users including air traffic managers and pilots.

The fiscal year 2012 request for NNEW is $27.35 million, a $7 million increase more than fiscal year 2010. To develop the NextGen weather dissemination system smoothly and efficiently, I urge you to support this request.

NextGen Reduce Weather Impact.—The goal of the NextGen Reduce Weather Impact program is to provide increased capacity in NAS while reducing congestion and meeting projected demand in an environmentally sound manner. The current weather observing network is inadequate to the needs of NextGen and improvements will be central to the work in the Reduce Weather Impact Program. Working with appropriate scientific, modeling, and user communities, current sensor information and dissemination shortfalls will be identified and evaluated. Investigating technologies for optimizing and improving automated aircraft weather reporting will also be conducted, to meet NextGen requirements.

The Reduce Weather Impact portfolio will leverage the NNEW transformational program that will interface with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's 4–D Weather Data Cube, for universal common access to weather information.

I urge you to increase the NextGen Reduce Weather Impact program funding to $43.2 million for fiscal year 2012, an increase of $7.6 million from fiscal year 2010.

On behalf of UCAR, I want to thank the subcommittee for its leadership in supporting research, development and technology transfer programs within the FHWA and FAA, and for your commitment to ensuring safer, more efficient air and road travel.

Prepared Statement of YWCA USA

Thank you Chairman Murray, Ranking Member Collins, and members of the subcommittee for the opportunity to submit testimony. My name is Gloria Lau, and I am the chief executive officer of the YWCA USA. As the Congress works on priorities for the fiscal year 2012 Federal budget, I would like to highlight one vital program in particular under the jurisdiction of this subcommittee: the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) which is administered by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

The YWCA USA is a national, not-for-profit (501(c)(3)) membership organization committed to eliminating racism, empowering women, and promoting peace, justice, freedom, and dignity for all. We represent more than 2 million women and girls with nearly 300 local associations nationwide. We serve thousands of women, girls, and their families annually through a variety of programs including violence prevention and recovery programs, housing programs, job training, and employment programs, childcare and early education programs, and more. Our clients include women and girls who come from all walks of life, including those escaping violence, low-income women and children, women veterans, elderly women, disabled women, and homeless women and their families.

The YWCA is a major provider of social services to women, children, and families throughout the United States. Today, the YWCA is the largest provider of battered women's shelters in the Nation and one of the largest providers of childcare. As a major provider of social services, the YWCA is extremely supportive of the CDBG. Every day, in communities across this country, we witness the important role CDBG plays in helping communities meet the needs of their low-income women, children, and families. Today, CDBG is one of three main funding streams for YWCA programs and services nationwide. YWCAs use CDBG funding for a variety of programs, including programs that assist victims of domestic violence and sexual assault, children and youth, and homeless women and children. CDBG also provides flexible funding for YWCAs nationwide to make capital improvements to their buildings such as installing wheelchair ramps or security cameras.

Because of our strong support for the CDBG, the YWCA asks the subcommittee to concur at a minimum to fund the CDBG program in HUD at $4 billion. This call for support comes directly from local communities across the country, as local YWCA associations surveyed in December 2010 identified this vital block grant as one of their most critical funding sources for the services they provide.

As members of the subcommittee know, the CDBG, created in 1974, is a block grant program that provides funding to local communities across the United States. The CDBG provides annual grants on a formula basis to more than 1,200 units of local government and States, which then use the funds to pay for community development initiatives, affordable housing programs, and anti-poverty initiatives. CDBG helps communities provide social services to low-income women, children, and families who reside in their communities, but cannot afford the cost of services.

While CDBG is often perceived as a funding stream mainly for local governments, the impact of this program on nonprofit organizations, such as the YWCA, is substantial. Local governments that receive CDBG collaborate with community service providers, such as YWCAs, to provide social services. The local governments then pass through the CDBG funds to the service providers to help cover the cost of the services provided.

As a service provider working with women, children, and families with unique needs, the YWCA values the fact that CDBG is not a cookie-cutter/one-size-fits-all program; it is a block grant funding stream that provides local governments and States flexibility in developing programs and services most appropriate to meet the needs of its low-income residents. Thanks to the flexibility afforded under the block grant, YWCAs are able to use CDBG funding for a variety of programs and services that help countless women, children, and families annually. For example, YWCAs use CDBG funding to provide:

—short-term shelter and supportive services for homeless families;
—night and day shelter and services for chronically homeless women;
—economic assistance programs that help low-income working women pay for work uniforms, tools, transportation, background checks, and certification and licensing fees;
—housing programs such as emergency, transitional, and permanent housing for women and families;
—programs and services for vulnerable women and children including programs that help formerly incarcerated women returning to the community;
—after-school groups and youth recreation programs in at-risk neighborhoods for girls and boys; and
—programs for adult and child survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault.

In addition, though often not recognized as an important source of funding for addressing violence against women and children, CDBG plays a critical role in the ability of YWCAs to meet the needs of women and children who are crime victims. For example, YWCAs nationwide are allocated CDBG funds by their local governments to provide anti-violence services such as emergency shelters and services for victims of domestic violence; sexual assault crisis services including 24-hour hotlines, support group and crisis counseling; hospital, police department and court accompaniments; and prevention education.

Given the flexible nature of CDBG, it is not surprising that YWCAs cite CDBG as one of the most vital sources of Federal funds available to serve people in their communities. Stories abound of how YWCAs have been able to serve women and families in cities and towns across the United States because of CDBG funding. The following are just a few stories:[1]

The YWCA of Lancaster uses CDBG funding to run its Sexual Assault Prevention and Counseling Center, which serves 700 to 1,000 direct service clients annually. Specifically, the YWCA uses CDBG funding to hire counselors to work directly with the victims of sexual assault. A loss in CDBG funding for the YWCA of Lancaster would mean sexual assault victims would not be able to receive services and would be placed on a waiting list. Maureen Powers, the executive director of the YWCA of Lancaster, comments, “One-third of our direct service clients are children, and we really should not have a waiting list for child clients. It takes a lot for them to disclose sexual abuse to begin with.” Though these are tight fiscal times for our Nation, I think many of us would agree that funding to help child victims of sexual assault is taxpayer money well spent.

Another story,[2] this time from the YWCA of Binghamton/Broome County in Binghamton, New York, further demonstrates how CDBG helps the most vulnerable in

[1] Ibid.
[2] As reported in “A Better Budget for All: Saving Our Economy and Helping Those in Need” published by Coalition on Human Needs for the “For the SAVE for All Campaign: Strengthening America’s Values and Economy for All”, on February 25, 2011, and downloaded from http://www.chn.org/pdf/2011/BetterBudget4AllReport.pdf.

our communities. The YWCA of Binghamton/Broome County uses CDBG funding to run its emergency shelter for women, which serves more than 300 women and children a year. Many of the women and children served by the shelter are victims of domestic violence. CDBG funds, which come to the program through the city of Binghamton annual Emergency Shelter Grant, are the shelter's primary funding source. A loss in CDBG funding would mean the women and children served by the shelter would not be able to receive housing and the shelter, the only facility of its kind in the community, would possibly have to close.

In today's anti-spending climate, people often believe Federal funding provides total operating funding for social service programs. That is not the case for local YWCAs that use Federal, State, and local funding as well as individual, foundation, and corporate donations. Even if CDBG does not provide total program funding for YWCA programs, CDBG provides funding for critical components of those programs. For YWCAs across this country, every dollar counts.

In addition to helping fund vital components of social services programs, CDBG helps nonprofit service providers leverage other sources of funding—whether from other government sources or private community support—to further assist women and children in need. For example, in 2010, the YWCA Seattle/King/Snohomish in Washington used more than $1.4 million in CDBG funding to leverage approximately $19 million in other funding to support some of its most critical programs such as those for homeless individuals and families and those with very low incomes. Though CDBG accounted for just a small percentage of this YWCA's government grants and operating income, the YWCA would have had to decrease services without CDBG funds.

In Lewiston, Maine, the YWCA has used support from community block grant funds to make an aging facility more safe, more energy efficient and more usable for the 10,000 people from a tri-county area who look to the YWCA for support and services. With just a modest amount of funding support, this Maine YWCA is working in close cooperation with its community to be more green, more accessible to disabled clients and more responsive to the women and their families who come to the YWCA for lifesaving support.

As you can see, this call for your support of CDBG comes directly from communities across the country. CDBG is an invaluable tool that assists local governments in addressing domestic violence, sexual assault, homelessness, and poverty. Severely cutting CDBG funding would cause budget gaps for local governments, lead to the discontinuation of many vital community services, and place in harm's way some of our Nation's most vulnerable women and children.

Though my testimony today is on behalf of the YWCA, the importance of CDBG is also recognized by the leaders of our Nation's cities and our U.S. Senators. These leaders recognize that cutting CDBG would be harmful because it promotes private sector growth.

For example, every $1 from the CDBG program brings in $1.62 in non-CDBG funds.[3] As noted by the National League of Cities, for nearly four decades, CDBG has served as a catalyst for financing housing, infrastructure, and economic development in America's cities and towns. The program has also been credited with retaining and creating employment opportunities. According to a letter written in March 2011 to the chairman and ranking member of the Appropriations Committee, signed by about one-third of the Senate, "Based on data that grantees have reported to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development over the past 6 years, the CDBG program has . . . created or retained 259,346 jobs for low- and moderate-income persons through a variety of economic development activities." The letter also notes that CDBG has:

—Assisted 865,874 low- and moderate-income households through single-family and multifamily residential rehabilitation, home ownership assistance, energy efficient improvements and lead-based paint abatement;
—Benefited 22,998,047 low- and moderate-income households through such public improvements as the development of senior centers, childcare centers, and centers for the disabled; and
—Benefited 73,863,286 low- and moderate-income households through public services such as employment and training, youth services, meals and other assistance to the elderly, and services for abused and neglected children.

The contribution of the CDBG program to thousands of communities across the country and hundreds of thousands of people in the United States cannot be denied.

In closing, the YWCA recognizes these are unique times in our Nation's history and we agree that our Nation must address its deficit and debt. At the same time,

[3] National League of Cities CDBG Issue Brief, downloaded April 12, 2011, from http://www.nlc.org/ASSETS/4D74A625F6714A6688F93FC892AA0FAC/CDBG-Issue-Brief.pdf.

the YWCA believes strongly that investments in local communities and programs are wise uses of Federal funds that provide substantial returns to our Nation. On behalf of YWCAs nationwide, we look to you for continued commitment to the women, children, and families we serve through the CDBG and respectfully ask the subcommittee to support the President's fiscal year 2012 budget request for $4 billion dollars in funding for CDBG.

Thank you once again for the opportunity to provide testimony to your subcommittee. Your attention and assistance are greatly appreciated.