

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3102

March 5, 2025

Secretary Scott Turner
Department of Housing and Urban Development
451 7th St. SW
Washington, DC 20410

Dear Secretary Turner,

I am writing to address the Administration's recent plans to impede the delivery of HUD's services. Housing affordability is a critical issue in my district, and the planned service cuts will decimate critical services that fund housing assistance and address homelessness in New Mexico.

The cost of housing is going up for my constituents, and New Mexico is facing a shortage of affordable housing, especially in rural and Tribal communities. That's why I am deeply concerned about the Trump Administration's plans to terminate thousands of HUD employees across the country. These cuts will be devastating, both for the workers themselves and for all communities struggling with housing affordability. If HUD does not have the staff to efficiently allocate funds, New Mexicans will be left behind waiting for the funding that they deserve.

I am especially concerned by the proposed cuts to the Office of Public and Indian Housing (PIH), which provides rental assistance to thousands of low-income New Mexicans. Since 2017, the average cost of rent in New Mexico has increased by more than 70 percent, and many of my constituents cannot afford to miss a month of rental assistance. The office also operates key Tribal housing programs, such as the Indian Housing Block Grant program, which is the backbone of affordable housing for Tribes and Pueblos in New Mexico. I oppose these cuts, which will create unnecessary delays and chaos for my constituents to access housing services.

I am also concerned by the Administration's proposal to cut 84% of its staff in the Office of Community Planning and Development (CPD). This office is responsible for providing recovery funding after natural disasters. My district has faced multiple devastating fires over the past few years, and many of my constituents are still waiting to receive compensation for their damaged properties. As wildfires become more frequent and more deadly in New Mexico, we should not be firing staff or slowing down the disaster recovery process.

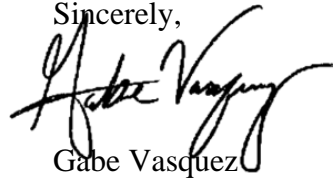
Due to the lack of affordable housing stock and rising rental costs, New Mexico currently has one of the fastest increase rates for homelessness in the nation. This includes many homeless veterans and families. I recently held a roundtable with housing service providers in my district, where I heard about the importance of Continuum of Care (CoC) funds to addressing homelessness. The proposed staffing cuts to CPD will slow down distribution of these funds. Furthermore, President Trump attempted to freeze CoC funding entirely in January. Though this freeze was blocked by a federal judge, national organizations have reported that many nonprofits are still unable to access funds, leading to furloughs and disruptions in services. These disruptions are unacceptable. I expect HUD to promptly distribute all of the CoC funding that

has been allocated, and to continue to distribute funding to meet the housing needs of New Mexicans.

The Trump Administration has also threatened tariffs on our key allies, which would drive up the cost of constructing new housing in my district. As you know, many of the United States' construction materials, such as steel and lumber, are sourced from Mexico and Canada. Any tariffs imposed on our key partners will increase the costs of materials, leading to increased costs of housing. I urge you to consider the impact on everyday Americans and the housing market if any additional tariffs are imposed, and I will push back on tariffs that drive up construction costs in New Mexico.

I appreciate your attention to this urgent matter and look forward to your timely response detailing how you will protect working New Mexicans from these proposed actions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gabe Vasquez", with a stylized, flowing script.

Gabe Vasquez
Member of Congress