

March 20, 2015

United States House of Representatives

Dear Representative:

The real estate industry is pleased that Congress supports efforts to streamline rental assistance programs. Our industry believes it is imperative for Congress to pass legislation that will improve the federally assisted housing rental programs for both residents and owners alike: doing so saves taxpayer dollars and eliminates inefficiencies. We support H. R. 233, the “Tenant Income Verification Relief Act of 2015” introduced by Congressman Perlmutter (D-CO) and Congressman Stivers (R-OH).

Our organizations represent owners, management companies, lenders, builders, developers, and housing cooperatives. We have long-supported these programs. The Housing Choice Voucher program provides rental subsidies to approximately two million low income households who obtain housing in the private rental market. This program broadens the range of housing choices for families seeking affordable housing, has a high success rate and serves as the cornerstone for public federal housing policy. The Project-Based Rental Assistance programs house nearly 1.3 million families and elderly households in privately owned housing – representing successful public and private partnerships that not only provide quality housing but often connect residents with services. This is particularly important for elderly residents, who may otherwise be forced to move to nursing homes. These programs are essential tools that also preserve and expand the supply of quality affordable housing, a necessity in today’s tight rental markets.

However, in spite of the overall success, the programs suffer under the weight of too many inefficient and duplicative requirements. The myriad overlapping and redundant procedures make the programs difficult to administer and, with respect to the voucher program, deter many professional landlords from participating. As such, we have worked diligently with Congress for several years to formulate common sense legislation that would streamline the sometimes burdensome procedures associated with operating and maintaining an assisted housing portfolio.

H.R. 233 significantly reduces administrative burdens by allowing for the recertification of residents’ income to occur every three years rather than annually for those residents on fixed incomes, permitting verification review efforts to focus on those whose incomes change.

We urge you to support efforts to streamline the assisted housing programs and urge Congress to pass H. R. 233, the “Tenant Income Verification Relief Act of 2015.”

Sincerely,

Council for Affordable and Rural Housing (CARH)
Institute of Real Estate Management (IREM)
Leading Age
National Apartment Association (NAA)
National Affordable Housing Management Association (NAHMA)
National Association of Home Builders (NAHB)
National Association of Housing Cooperatives (NAHC)
National Association of Realtors (NAR)
National Leased Housing Association (NLHA)
National Multifamily Housing Council (NMHC)