



19 Community Drive • Augusta, Maine 04330 • (207) 622-7501 • Fax: (207) 623-3590

April 24, 2025

The Honorable Mike Flood
Chairman
Subcommittee on Housing and Insurance
U.S House Financial Services Committee
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Emanuel Cleaver
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Housing and Insurance
U.S House Financial Services Committee
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Flood and Ranking Member Cleaver:

The Maine Association of REALTORS® is pleased to write this letter of support for the modernization and continuation of the HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME) Program and the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program.

The Maine Association of REALTORS®, established in 1936, has a membership totaling over 6,300 REALTORS® and approximately 400 affiliate members representing businesses and professions with related real estate interests. REALTORS® protect private property rights, build communities, and grow our nation's economy. Our members represent buyers and sellers involved in both residential and commercial real estate transactions.

Our Association does not directly administer the HOME or CDBG programs in Maine, but we advocate daily for the need for housing supply in Maine. The 2023 Maine Housing Production Needs Study produced by the Maine Governor's Office, Maine Housing, and the Maine Department of Economic and Community Development reports that Maine needs up to 84,300 units of additional housing before 2030 to meet the expected population growth and remedy historic underproduction. Maine's vacancy rate for housing is an alarming 1.6%, driving the costs for rental units and home ownership beyond the reach of most Maine households. According to the National Association of REALTORS®, Maine's home price gains of 73.1% since pre-Covid is the highest home price gains in the country.

In 2024, the CDBG Program was allocated \$11.8 million, and the HOME Program was allocated \$3.9 million. Those funds were vital to meeting the housing needs of Maine families. To date, there has been no 2025 allocation announcement.

If allocated future funding, the CDBG and HOME Programs in Maine plan to address the following goals between 2025 and 2029:

- Improve and preserve the quality of housing
- Expand affordable housing opportunities
- Help Maine people attain housing stability
- Improve economic opportunities for families
- Improve public infrastructure



REALTOR® - is a registered mark which identifies a professional in real estate who subscribes to a strict Code of Ethics as a member of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®



EQUAL HOUSING
OPPORTUNITY

With CDBG and HOME Funds, program administrators expect to achieve the following in Maine:

- shelter 5000 homeless individuals
- provide rapid rehousing for 2900 homeless individuals
- create 80 new housing units
- rehabilitate 100 rental units
- rehabilitate 200 homeowner housing units
- assist 1500 persons with public facility or infrastructure activity

The CDBG and HOME Programs provide much needed resources to rehabilitate aging housing stock, incentivize the construction of affordable rentals and homes, as well as expand residential public water and public sewer systems which strengthen local infrastructure to be able to accommodate additional housing units in the future. Often the funds used from these programs are what enables many rehabilitation projects to cross the finish line. Without this funding, many impactful projects would be delayed or stopped altogether. The investment of CDBG funds goes a long way in terms of its reach for housing rehabilitation and adaptive reuse in Maine, serving as a piece that makes a project successful.

These programs help address the fundamental cause of Maine's housing problem: a lack of supply.

We strongly support continued funding for these programs and can help facilitate responses to any questions you may have about how the CDBG Program and HOME Program are achieving cost-effective, positive results in Maine.

Thank you for your leadership in ensuring that families have a safe and affordable place to call home.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey Harris, President
Maine Association of REALTORS®