



June 4, 2020

The Honorable Benjamin Carson
Secretary
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
451 7th Street SW
Washington, D.C.

Dear Secretary Carson:

LeadingAge, on behalf of our almost 6,000 nonprofit HUD-assisted housing and other aging services provider members, urges you to distribute critically needed COVID-19 relief funds provided by the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act to Section 202 Housing for the Elderly and Section 8 Project-Based Rental Assistance senior housing providers as quickly as possible.

More than two month after enactment of the CARES Act, HUD-assisted Section 8 Project-Based Rental Assistance and Section 202 Housing for the Elderly senior communities have not received urgently-needed relief funds for COVID-19 expenses, including critical cleaning, supplies, and staffing costs.

While we were pleased to see HUD announce, on June 1, distribution of \$800 million of the CARES Act's \$1 billion for Section 8 Project-Based Rental Assistance, these dollars will go to maintaining pre-crisis contract amounts at PBRA communities that have experienced decreases in tenant income because of COVID-19. Meanwhile, HUD-assisted senior housing communities have experienced fewer decreases in tenant rent due to lost income, but continue to expend significant unbudgeted funds to ensure their communities are safe for the hundreds of thousands of at-risk residents who live there and the dedicated staff who work there.

We urge HUD to release the remaining \$200 million in Section 8 Project-Based Rental Assistance funds as well as the CARES Act's \$50 million for the Section 202 Housing for the Elderly program, including up to \$10 million for Service Coordinators, out to communities as quickly as possible.

More than 1.1 million older adults live in HUD-subsidized apartment buildings, including approximately 800,000 in HUD-assisted multifamily senior housing. Residents in HUD-assisted senior housing communities are facing triple jeopardy during this public health crisis. First, they are older. The average age of residents in Section 202 properties for older adults is 79, and nearly 39% of residents are older than age 80. Second, they have low incomes. The average annual income of Section 202 households is below \$14,000. Third, they experience health disparities. Senior housing communities often have large black and Latino populations that have been found to experience profound disparities in both COVID-19 infections and virus-related deaths.

The CARES Act became Public Law 116-136 on March 27, 2020. The time is long overdue for HUD-assisted senior housing providers to receive the funding they need to pay for cleaning, disinfecting, personal protective equipment, services, security, and other COVID-19-related costs.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Katie Smith Sloan".

Katie Smith Sloan
President and CEO