February 9, 2021

The Honorable Maxine Waters
Chair
House Committees on Financial Services
Washington, DC 20510

Chairwoman Waters:

On behalf of LeadingAge’s more than 5,000 nonprofit aging services providers and other mission-minded organizations that touch millions of lives every day, I write to urge you to include relief proposed by your 2020 bill, H.R. 6873, the Emergency Housing Assistance for Older Adults Act, in the COVID-19 relief package the Committee on Financial Services is preparing for the House Committee on the Budget.

The bill directly responds to the urgent needs of older adult residents of HUD-assisted affordable housing communities by providing:

- $300 million for Service Coordinators. These dollars will help provide service coordinators in the half of HUD senior buildings that currently do not have them. Service coordinators fulfill the critical role of connecting older adult residents to needed services. The $300 million for new service coordinators was included in the House-passed HEROES Act.

- $50 million for wireless internet installation and service fees for HUD-assisted resident apartments. Without internet in their apartments, residents miss out on efforts to combat social isolation, telehealth, and connection to community services.

- $845 million to cover COVID-19 costs in affordable senior housing communities, including staffing, cleaning and disinfecting, PPE, services like meals, security, etc.

Almost 800,000 older adults live in privately-owned, HUD-assisted housing through programs like Project-Based Rental Assistance and Section 202 Housing for the Elderly. These residents, and the providers who serve them, need your help.

The provisions in the bill are supported by:

- AARP
- American Association of Service Coordinators
- B’nai B’rith International
- Center for Disability Rights
- National Alliance of HUD Tenants
- n4a
- National Association of Social Workers (NASW)
- National Association for County Community and Economic Development
We urge the Committee on Financial Services to include this relief for older adults in HUD-assisted senior housing communities. Please reach out to Linda Couch, lcouch@leadingage.org, with any questions.

Sincerely,

Katie Smith Sloan
President and CEO
LeadingAge

cc: Members, House Committee on Financial Services