

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

June 11, 2020

The Honorable Ben Carson
Secretary
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
451 7th St. SW
Washington, D.C. 20410

Dear Secretary Carson:

We write to express our support for the waiver request submitted by the North Dakota Department of Commerce (NDDC) to use Community Development Block Grant Coronavirus (CDBG-CV) funds, provided by the CARES Act, to implement a low-income rental assistance program. This waiver request is vital to the welfare and timely assistance of North Dakota citizens. We appreciate your timely attention to this matter.

As you know, the CARES Act provides \$5 billion in supplemental appropriations to the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Community Development Fund, of which, \$2 billion is set aside for the department's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. The act directs HUD to administer these funds pursuant to Section 106 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 and grants authority to the Secretary to waive or specify alternative requirements for these funds.

On May 2, 2020, the North Dakota Department of Human Services (NDDHS) announced a state-facilitated rental assistance program to provide up to three months of rental assistance to North Dakotan households earning 60% or below area median income (AMI) living in non-assisted housing. Assistance provided through the program is based on documented need due to the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic, and the State is seeking to make direct payments to landlords on behalf of the qualified household.

The State of North Dakota intends to use CDBG-CV funds to support a portion of this program, and has submitted a request for a waiver to use the CDBG-CV allocation to fund the rent bridge program in partnership with the NDDHS. We encourage your timely consideration of this waiver to ensure the program receives adequate funding and to provide North Dakotan's with the timely assistance needed during this national emergency.

Thank you for your consideration and attention to this matter. Please do not hesitate to contact us should you have questions or require additional information.

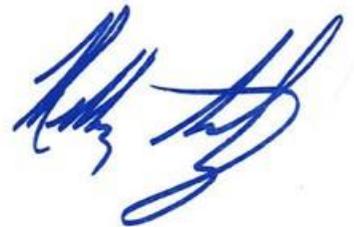
Sincerely,



JOHN HOEVEN
U.S. Senator



KEVIN CRAMER
U.S. Senator



KELLY ARMSTRONG
U.S. Congressman