



February 10, 2021

Dear Senator:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, we write to express our strong support for the nomination of Rep. Marcia Fudge, D. Ohio, as the next Secretary of the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Rep. Fudge stands out on the basis of her strong qualifications, her long track record of working across party lines and with a wide range of stakeholders, and her demonstrated lifelong commitment to advancing the civil rights of all people. We urge the Senate to support her prompt confirmation.

Rep. Fudge's nomination to serve as our nation's lead policymaker on housing could not come at a more crucial time for our nation. The ongoing COVID-19 crisis threatens to drastically increase homelessness, evictions and foreclosures in communities throughout the nation, with a particularly detrimental economic impact on people of color and women. Despite a patchwork of federal and state protections and relief efforts, millions of families are already behind on mortgage and rent payments. Moreover, census data shows that women and families of color are several times more likely than their white counterparts to face the prospect of eviction or foreclosure.

The looming problems threaten to make existing racial and gender disparities in housing and homeownership even worse. Even before the COVID-19 pandemic ravaged our economy, women and families of color were already struggling to regain their financial footing, both in the aftermath of the 2008 recession and in the wake of decades of persistent discrimination in housing and lending. Prior to the COVID-19 crisis, homeownership rates for African-American families had already fallen to a rate that was little better than it was when the Fair Housing Act was first signed into law, and the damage incurred by the current crisis could be catastrophic. HUD plays an essential role in the monumental task of addressing our nation's legacy of discrimination, while at the same time promoting an economic recovery that truly reaches all communities.

Rep. Fudge's qualifications and background make her well-suited to lead HUD in playing this role. After graduating from law school, she worked as a law clerk and then as director of the personal property tax department in Cuyahoga County, Ohio. She then became deputy county auditor for the county's estate tax department, the director of the Cuyahoga County Budget Commission, and following that, worked as the director of budget and finance for the Cuyahoga County prosecutor's office. In 1999, she became chief of staff for the late Rep. Stephanie Tubbs Jones, D. Ohio, before returning to Ohio to become the mayor of Warrensville Heights. When Rep. Tubbs Jones tragically passed away in 2008, Rep. Fudge ran for her former boss' seat in a special election, and has held the position ever since.

During her tenure in the House, Rep. Fudge has served on the Committee on House Administration (including as Chair of the Subcommittee on Elections), the Committee on

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Wade Henderson



Agriculture (including as Chair of the Subcommittee on Nutrition, Oversight and Department Operations), and the Committee on Education and Labor. In the 113th Congress, she was elected to serve as Chair of the Congressional Black Caucus. Throughout this time, Rep. Fudge has consistently stood out as a leader for civil and human rights priorities including voting rights, education, child nutrition, economic safety nets, Medicare and Medicaid, and fair labor practices, bringing a strong work ethic and a practical approach to addressing a wide range of our nation's issues.

In her recent confirmation hearing, Rep. Fudge reiterated her strong commitment to enforcing the Fair Housing Act, strengthening fair housing protections, promoting sustainable homeownership, increasing the availability of affordable rental homes, reducing the impact of lead and other environmental hazards in housing, addressing the particular housing needs of Native American populations, preventing foreclosures and evictions, and reducing homelessness.

We believe that Rep. Fudge's diversity of experience, her strong commitment to civil and human rights, and her proven ability to work with a wide range of stakeholders make her well-suited to carry out these important tasks as the Secretary of HUD in the coming years. We strongly urge you to support her prompt confirmation.

Sincerely,

The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights
A Philip Randolph Institute
American Federation of Teachers
Americans for Financial Reform
Center for Community Progress
Center for Disability Rights
Center for Responsible Lending
Clearinghouse on Women's Issues
Equal Justice Society
Equality California
Equally American Legal Defense and Education Fund
Faith in Action
Feminist Majority Foundation
Homeownership Alliance
Human Rights Campaign
The International Union, United Automobile, Aerospace, and Agricultural Implement Workers of America (UAW)
Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law
NAACP
NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc.
National Action Network (NAN)
National Association of Neighborhoods
National Black Justice Coalition



National CAPACD
National Center for Lesbian Rights
National Community Reinvestment Coalition
National Community Stabilization Trust
National Council of Asian Pacific Americans (NCAPA)
National Council of Jewish Women
National Fair Housing Alliance
National Housing Law Project
National Housing Resource Center
National Low Income Housing Coalition
National Urban League
National Women's Law Center
People For the American Way
Poverty & Race Research Action Council
Prosperity Now
Service Employees International Union (SEIU)
Silver State Equality-Nevada
Voices for Progress