[Your logo]

[Date]

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein

United States Senate

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Washington, DC 20510

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OR

The Honorable Barbara Boxer

United States Senate

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Washington, DC 20510

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**RE: Support for S. 2962 and S. 3083**

Dear Senator [Name]:

[Organization] is pleased to support the Affordable Housing Credit Improvement Act (S. 2962) and the Housing Opportunity Through Modernization Act (S. 3083) and we strongly encourage you to co-sponsor these important measures.

[About your organization]

Since 2008, rents have skyrocketed, while at the same time, state and federal investment in affordable home production dropped 66%. The resulting housing affordability crisis is affecting Californians at nearly every income level. California has the 15th highest poverty rate in the nation – *until you factor in housing costs* – then we jump to #1. California is short more than 1.5 million rental homes for extremely low-income and very low-income renter households. These include preschool teachers, EMTs, retail and restaurant workers who are driven into poverty by unaffordable rents.

The Low Income Housing Tax Credit (Housing Credit) is the nation’s most successful tool for encouraging private investment in the production and preservation of affordable housing. Since 1986, the Housing Credit has produced or preserved over 300,000 homes, created 340,000 jobs, and generated $32.33 billion in local income and $12.73 billion in tax revenues in California alone. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development programs uniquely promote the well-being of our communities by providing essential seed capital and program funding that enables public and private partners to build critical transportation infrastructure, spur economic development in communities, and help more than 5 million seniors, people with disabilities, and other families afford stable housing. Now, more than ever, we need to expand and strengthen these programs that produce and preserve essential housing for low-income households.

The Affordable Housing Credit Improvement Act (S. 2962), co-sponsored by Senator Maria Cantwell (D-WA) and Senate Finance Committee Chairman Orrin Hatch (R-UT), would enable the development or preservation of up to 400,000 affordable homes over the next decade by increasing each state’s Housing Credit allocation authority. Despite the growing need for affordable housing, Congress has not increased Housing Credit authority in 16 years, and viable and sorely needed Housing Credit developments are turned down each year because Housing Credit resources fall far short of the demand. California’s Housing Credit is oversubscribed by 2 to 1. For the more than 11 million low-income renter households who spend over half of their income on housing – choosing between paying the rent or their medical bills, making repairs to their cars, or enrolling in job training classes – an expansion of the Housing Credit cannot come soon enough.

The Housing Opportunity Through Modernization Act (S. 3083), co-sponsored by Tim Scott (R-SC) and Robert Menendez (D-NJ), would help state and local agencies stretch limited funds and reduce the risk of harsh cuts in assistance to families in need. These reforms ease administrative burdens for housing agencies and owners, while delivering fairer and more efficient assistance to low-income families. In addition, the bill provides new tools to preserve affordable housing, reduce homelessness, increase self-sufficiency and expand access to areas of greater opportunity. The bill’s rental assistance provisions, taken together, also avoid any cost increase, and could modestly reduce the cost of providing the current level of assistance. Congress has vetted most of the bill’s provisions for nearly a decade as part of earlier proposals that have had broad support in Congress and among stakeholders, but have never become law. We hope the Senate will move quickly to approve S. 3083, which is the Senate's version of the unanimously House-passed bill H.R. 3700, and to send it the President’s desk for enactment.

Having a healthy housing market that provides an adequate supply of homes affordable to Californians at all income levels is critical to the economic prosperity and quality of life in the state of California. To that end, S. 2962 and S. 3083 would enable thousands of new affordable homes to be developed. We thank you for your past support of affordable housing. We strongly encourage you to co-sponsor these bills.

Sincerely,

Name

Title