

June 14, 2021

Hon. Anita Bonds  
Chairman, Committee on Housing and Executive Administration  
Council of the District of Columbia  
John A. Wilson Building  
1350 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20004  
Submitted via: [housing@dccouncil.us](mailto:housing@dccouncil.us)

RE: FY22 Budget Oversight for the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) and Housing Production Trust Fund (HPTF)

Dear Chairperson Bonds and members of the Committee:

Please accept these comments on behalf of the Coalition for Smarter Growth. The Coalition for Smarter Growth is a nonprofit organization that advocates for walkable, bikeable, inclusive, and transit-oriented communities as the most sustainable and equitable way for the Washington, DC region to grow and provide opportunities for all.

We wish to express our support for the FY22 budget for DHCD and HPTF. Also, we believe that in order to meaningfully address poverty and racial inequality in the District, the city must invest in the issue areas that are prioritized in the Fair Budget Coalition platform.

We want to especially commend the Mayor's budget proposal for funding the Housing Production Trust Fund (HPTF) in FY21 at \$250 million, and FY22 at \$250 million. In addition, we strongly support the proposed \$42 million for new LRSP vouchers to create 1,100 deeply affordable units. This investment in LRSP is essential to supporting the goal for the HPTF to reach extremely low income residents. Without LRSP operating dollars, the HPTF capital investments cannot help our residents facing the greatest need.

We also commend the Mayor's intent to build dedicated affordable housing in Ward 3. Constructing more market rate housing and dedicated affordable housing in Ward 3, a high-resource community, is an important part of building a more racially and economically equitable city.

In addition, we would like to call out two small investments that we believe can have an outsized effect.

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**Accessory Apartments Demonstration:** We are thrilled that the administration is committing to standing up a pilot program with \$1.5 million to offer financial incentives to make it easier for eligible homeowners to create accessory apartments. This initiative helps build wealth and financial security for lower income homeowners while creating new lower cost housing opportunities for renters.

The program's income targeting, however, up to 120% MFI, is too high. We recommend refocusing benefits to homeowners earning 80% MFI and below.

We are grateful that our [Homeowner's ADU Manual](#) is highlighted in the Mayor's housing budget presentation, and are eager to work with our co-author, United Planning Organization (UPO) to ensure the initiative's success.

**Douglass Community Land Trust:** We are excited to support the \$2 million for the Douglass Community Land Trust to acquire affordable commercial and residential properties. The Douglass CLT is the leading CLT in our city and shows how the community-ownership model works to help residents and small businesses to have security in their living or work space, and build wealth. The CLT model also sustains the continuity of a community, especially Black and Brown communities, and counters the pressure of gentrification and neighborhood change over time. The CLT model is an essential tool to address the challenges of Black home and business ownership, wealth-building, and displacement of long term residents and businesses.

In conclusion, we wish to reiterate our support for the administration's FY22 budget. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Cheryl Cort  
Policy Director