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July 26, 2010

The Honorable Maxine Waters
Chair
Subcommittee on Housing and Community Opportunity
Financial Services Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC

Dear Chair Waters:

I am pleased to express the National Low Income Coalition's support for H.R. 5814, the Public Housing Reinvestment and Tenant Protection Act of 2010. This bill is a compendium of four bills, all focused on preserving public housing and improving the lives of tenants.

NLIHC is dedicated solely to achieving socially just public policy that assures people with the lowest incomes in the United States have affordable and decent homes. Our members include non-profit housing providers, homeless service providers, fair housing organizations, state and local housing coalitions, public housing agencies, private developers and property owners, housing researchers, local and state government agencies, faith-based organizations, residents of public and assisted housing and their organizations, and concerned citizens. The National Low Income Housing Coalition does not represent any sector of the housing industry. Rather, NLIHC works only on behalf of and with low income people who need safe, decent, and affordable housing, especially those with the most serious housing problems. NLIHC is entirely funded with private donations.

NLIHC is especially supportive of Title II of the bill, the Public Housing One-for-One Replacement and Tenant Protection Act. NLIHC testified in strong support of this bill in April before the Committee. The nation has lost more than 100,000 public housing units through the demolition and disposition of public housing units since 1995, a hemorrhaging that this bill would significantly stifle. In doing so, the bill would also assure public housing residents a right to return to revitalized homes and increased requirements to participate in decisions regarding a public housing agency's demolition or disposition application.

Title I of the bill, the Choice Neighborhoods Initiative, would authorize a priority of the Obama Administration. NLIHC is pleased that H.R. 5814 seems to make significant



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improvements to the Department of Housing and Urban Development's proposed legislation, by strengthening resident participation requirements; narrowing opportunities to replace hard, affordable housing units with tenant-based vouchers; and requiring an affordability plan where the grantee must show how it will maintain affordable housing in the neighborhood over the next 50 years. NLIHC looks forward to working as this bill progresses to continue to strengthen the bill's one-for-one replacement requirements.

NLIHC also supports Title III of the bill, the Public Housing Preservation and Rehabilitation Act and Title IV, the Together We Care Act. Both of these titles will preserve the nation's investment in public housing while improving the lives of public housing tenants.

Thank you for your leadership on preserving public housing.

Sincerely,

Sheila Crowley
President and CEO