



November 17, 2025

Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors
1025 Escobar St.
Martinez, CA 94553

Supervisor John Gioia, District I
Chair Candace Andersen, District II
Supervisor Diane Burgis, District III
Supervisor Ken Carlson, District IV
Supervisor Shanelle Scales-Preston, District V

Re: Allocation of Community Impact (ARPA) Funds for Rental Assistance

Dear Supervisors,

The coalition writing to you represents 6 non-profit affordable housing developers operating in Contra Costa County. Collectively, our organizations manage 56 buildings, providing homes to 2,268 low-income families across the county. More than half of the residents we serve qualify as extremely low-income, earning less than 30% of the Area Median Income, or \$47,950 per year for a family of four. 462 of our residents are people who have found stable housing for the first time after exiting homelessness. **We are writing to you with one voice today, recommending that \$3 million dollars of your remaining Community Impact or ARPA funds be allocated to county rental assistance programs.**

The mission of all of our organizations is to keep low-income residents in the communities we serve stably housed, recognizing that stable housing is the foundation of stable health, positive educational outcomes, and economic opportunity for all. Our work puts us directly in touch with many of Contra Costa County's most vulnerable residents, and it is evident to us that in this current climate, the ability to pay even a subsidized or below market rate rent is becoming more and more strained every day. Many of our residents who have exited homelessness became homeless after one unexpected crisis made it impossible for them to pay their rent. Even in the context of an affordable housing project, our residents sometimes need to rely on outside support to pay their rent when unexpected circumstances impact their financial situation.

Our organizations applaud Contra Costa's innovative approaches to rental assistance programs, and have seen how effective they have been at serving residents across the county. In the case of affordable housing, relatively small remittances from County rental assistance programs are often paired with support services and payment plans our own organizations offer to help tenants maintain stable housing in emergency situations. While eviction for nonpayment of rent in emergency situations is exceedingly rare within our

properties, County rental assistance has sometimes been a key factor in ensuring that a resident is able to stay in their home.

Over the past few years, however, **these rental assistance programs have become increasingly difficult to access. With program cuts of over \$1.4 million, our resident services managers report that fewer and fewer residents are able to successfully apply for rental assistance**, even in cases where they would have previously received aid from the County. We see some assistance providers who, with limited funds, exclude residents of affordable housing from support through their programs. In at least one case, failure to obtain rental assistance has resulted in an eviction. In other cases, our asset managers must work creatively to absorb the cost of lost rent. This leaves fewer resources available to serve all of our residents and maintain affordable housing in Contra Costa County. Allocating \$3 million to county rental assistance programs would restore \$1.43 million cut from these programs since 2023, and meet the rising needs we've seen of community members who face overlapping pressures of rising costs and cuts to support services in all areas of their lives.

Support for tenants of affordable housing is especially critical at this moment as we see massive federal cuts to Continuum of Care (CoC) funding. In addition to other critical homelessness response and prevention programs, the CoC funds long-term rental subsidy for tenants who have exited homelessness. While the exact impact of the new NOFO is currently unclear, we know that these rental subsidies are a specific target of the proposed cuts. This misguided federal policy will leave hundreds of vulnerable households without the support they rely on to pay their rent. In the short term, **a properly funded rental assistance program is needed as a stop-gap to help tenants affected by these cuts maintain their housing stability.** Looking forward, it is of the utmost importance that the county identifies funding to continue offering long-term housing subsidies to prevent returns to homelessness and stabilize supportive housing properties. Our organizations hope to be part of ongoing conversations regarding how the county funds homelessness *prevention* and *response* at the same time while we weather these federal cuts.

Spending small sums through rental assistance to prevent homelessness saves both the County and social service providers enormous sums of money in homelessness response. **We strongly and respectfully recommend that the county allocate \$3 million in Community Impact/ARPA funds to rental assistance programs at your November 18 meeting.**

Sincerely,

Avni Desai, Director of Policy and Engagement, *Christian Church Homes*
Donald Gilmore, Executive Director, *Community Housing Development Corporation*
Laura Hall, President and CEO, *EAH Housing*
Michele Blackwell, Director of Resident and Community Services, *East Bay Asian Local Development Corporation*
Joey Flegel-Mishlove, Senior Policy Associate, *East Bay Housing Organizations*
Courtney Pal, Policy Manager, *Resources for Community Development*
Cymone S. Goree, Property Manager, *Richmond Neighborhood Housing Services*