October 20, 2011

The Honorable Jeff Merkley
313 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Scott Brown
359 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Merkley and Senator Brown,

We are writing in support of the Merkley-Brown preservation amendment. This amendment is critical to the preservation of affordable rental housing units that are at risk of being lost. Your leadership on this issue will ensure that these units remain viable housing options for low-income families. This is a no cost amendment.

As you are aware, certain HUD programs do not offer owners the ability to renew their rental assistance contracts. With the continuation of a long term contract, owners or preservation purchasers will be able to better maintain the properties by leveraging outside financing and residents will maintain their mobility options.

This no-cost solution is critical in serving low-income families across the country. Over half of the residents in HUD-assisted housing are elderly or persons with disabilities. The average income of these families is $11,400. It is critical to preserve the hard rental units in order to ensure that vulnerable populations have housing options in the future that are safe, decent and affordable.

Thank you for your leadership on this critical issue and we look forward to working with you in the future on creative and economical solutions for housing.

Sincerely,

The National Preservation Working Group

Action Housing (Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania)
Alliance to Develop Power (Springfield, Massachusetts)
Association for Neighborhood and Housing Development (New York City)
Beacon Development Group (Washington State)
California Coalition for Rural Housing
California Housing Partnership Corporation
CASA of Oregon
Center on Budget and Policy Priorities
Chicago Rehab Network
Chicago Housing Initiative
Coalition for Non-profit Housing and Economic Development
Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio
Coastal Enterprises, Inc. (Maine)
Common Bond Communities (Minnesota)
Community Economic Development Assistance Corporation (Massachusetts)
Community Housing Partners (Virginia)
Community Investment Corporation (Chicago)
Community Service Society of New York
Crossroads Urban Center (Utah)
Enterprise Community Partners
Florida Legal Services, Inc.
Homes for America (Maryland)
Housing Alliance of Pennsylvania
Housing and Community Development Network of New Jersey
Housing Assistance Council
Housing Partnership Network
Housing Preservation Project (Minnesota)
Lakeview Action Coalition
Leading Age
Legal Aid Society
Local Initiatives Support Corporation
Lutheran Services
Mercy Housing
MidPen Housing (California)
Minnesota Housing Partnership
National Alliance of HUD Tenants
National Church Residences
National Council of State Housing Agencies
National Farm Workers Service Center, Inc.
National Housing Conference
National Housing Law Project
National Housing Trust
National Low Income Housing Coalition
Neighborhood Services Organization (Michigan)
Network for Oregon Affordable Housing
Ohio Capital Corporation for Housing
Pratt Area Community Council (New York)
Preservation of Affordable Housing
Public Counsel Law Center
Sargent Shriver Center on Poverty Law
Shimberg Center for Housing Studies
Smart Growth America
Stewards for Affordable Housing for the Future
Tenants and Neighbors (New York)
Texas Tenants’ Union
The Community Builders, Inc. (Massachusetts)
Urban Homesteading Assistance Board (New York)
Volunteers of America