

United States Senate

May 6, 2021

The Honorable Marcia Fudge
Secretary
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
451 7th Street S.W.
Washington, DC 20410

Dear Secretary Fudge:

Thank you for speaking with me prior to your confirmation. I appreciated the opportunity to discuss the affordable housing issues facing Floridians, and the ways that we can help families across our nation succeed and live the American dream.

I grew up in public housing. My parents struggled to find work and provide for our family. Even with no money, my mom was always optimistic and hopeful. She taught me the value of hard work and told us we were blessed because God and our founders created the world's greatest nation, where anything was possible. I was able to grow up and achieve my dreams because in our great nation, if you work hard, anything is possible. I want every American to have the same opportunity I did to live the American dream.

I share your goal of increasing and improving our nation's affordable housing stock and I look forward to working with you to do this in a smart and cost effective manner that best serves our families. As you make grants for federal housing projects available, I expect that you will keep the importance of American jobs and economic growth in mind. As Governor of Florida, we helped empower rural communities through the Small Cities Community Development Block Grant. Through these grants, Florida's rural communities received \$11.6 million for infrastructure projects, creating hundreds of jobs and helping communities retain more than an additional 1,000 jobs. Job creation and economic development are vital to community improvement and I hope to see these initiatives prioritized by the Department under your leadership.

Florida is home to more than 21 million people, and our population grows every day as Americans flee to the Sunshine State from high tax states like New York and California. During my time as Governor of Florida, our state invested more than \$1 billion to improve our affordable housing programs, but there is still work to be done. Ensuring we have enough affordable housing is important to the growth of my state

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and our nation. With Florida being the state with one of the largest populations of people over the age of 65, access to affordable housing for the elderly is also something I look forward to working with you on.

As you work collaboratively with local communities, I urge you to find ways to address zoning issues and other barriers to affordable housing without federal preemption or intervention. Further, as you carry out your duties as Secretary, I urge you to seek ways to better target and streamline HUD programs that meet the Department's current mandate and to work with other agencies to reduce the duplication and waste that plagues many federal housing programs today.

Thank you again for your consideration on these important matters, and I hope that you will prioritize affordable housing, American jobs, and spending American taxpayer dollars in the best interest of our nation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Rick Scott". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Rick Scott
United States Senator