

PUBLIC STATEMENT

RESPONSE BY VIRGINIA HOUSING ADVOCATES AND ALLIES TO VA MONEY COMMITTEES STRIPPING GOVERNOR'S ALLOCATION FOR THE VIRGINIA HOUSING TRUST FUND

February 6, 2019

On Tuesday, the Virginia House Appropriations and Senate Finance Subcommittees released their recommendations for the 2019-2020 biennial budget. These recommendations fail to significantly increase to the Virginia Housing Trust Fund, despite the Governor's proposal to expand it by \$19.5 million over two years. The House recommendations included *no* increase to the trust fund; the Senate recommendations included \$1million - just **5%** of the executive proposal - over two years.

In light of the overwhelmingly bi-partisan efforts to provide a \$750 million incentive package over 15 years for Amazon, as well as \$50 million for Micron, we are outraged that selected members of Virginia's money committees stripped this critical support for housing for Virginia families.

Sixty-three out of 100 low-income households in the Commonwealth cannot find a home or apartment that is affordable to them. These struggling households are our seniors, people with disabilities, our workforce, young families and new graduates, living everywhere from the rural communities in southwest Virginia to the metro areas of Richmond, Norfolk, and Northern Virginia. Advocates and community partners working to combat this crisis of affordability submitted over \$17 million in new housing proposals to the Virginia Housing Trust Fund in 2017, but with the current allocations to the fund at just \$5.5 million, nearly \$12 million in urgent housing solutions went unfunded.

Housing is the platform for individual and family stability. If we as a state are concerned about our children's educational outcomes, the physical and mental health of our residents, healthy vibrant neighborhoods and communities, and investing in our workforce, we need to invest in affordable housing and expand the funding in the Virginia Housing Trust Fund. At a time when the state is approving \$50 million in subsidies to Micron and \$750 million to Amazon, it is wholly appropriate and necessary to invest \$19.5 million in housing (just 2.4% of the amount in the corporate packages).

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A-SPAN, Arlington
AHC, Inc. Arlington
Albemarle Housing Improvement Program (AHIP)
Alliance for Housing Solutions, Arlington
Alexandria Housing Development Corporation, Alexandria
Amherst County Habitat for Humanity
Arlington Partnership for Affordable Housing, Arlington
Better Housing Coalition, Richmond
Britepaths, Fairfax
Campaign to Reduce Evictions (CARE), Richmond

Carpenter's Shelter, Alexandria
Campaign for Housing and Civic Engagement (CHACE), Richmond
Coalition for Smarter Growth
Cornerstones, Reston
FACETS, Fairfax
Fellowship Square, Reston
For Us Not Amazon Coalition
Fran Lunney, Arlington
Good Shepherd Housing and Family Services, Alexandria
Grassroots Alexandria, Alexandria
Habitat for Humanity Northern Virginia
Helping Overcome Poverty's Existence, Inc. (HOPE), Wytheville
Housing and Development Advisors, Richmond
Housing Opportunities Made Equal (HOME), Richmond
Humankind, Lynchburg
LINK of Hampton Roads
LISC Virginia, Richmond
Neighborhood Fundamentals, Arlington
New Hope Housing, Alexandria
Northern Virginia Affordable Housing Alliance
Pathway Homes, Fairfax
Piedmont Housing Alliance, Charlottesville
Rush Homes, Lynchburg
Social Action Linking Together (SALT), Vienna
Stratford Capital Group, Tysons
Tenant and Workers United, Alexandria
United Community Ministries, Alexandria
Urban Hope, Richmond
Virginia Supportive Housing, Richmond
Wesley Housing Development Corporation, Alexandria