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May 13, 2004

The Honorable Christopher S. Bond  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Veterans Affairs,  
Housing and Urban Development,  
and Independent Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Barbara A. Mikulski  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Veterans Affairs,  
Housing and Urban Development,  
and Independent Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Re: Housing Choice Voucher Program

Dear Mr. Chairman and Senator Mikulski:

We write to seek your immediate assistance in preventing thousands of low-income families from becoming homeless, in light of a U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Notice (Notice PIH 2004-7) that reflects a change in the manner in which the Housing Choice Voucher Program will be funded. We understand this change will present extraordinary challenges for many American families to maintain their housing as well as deny the opportunity to others, some of whom have waited patiently for years for such assistance.

The American Bar Association has a long history of working to improve access to justice for all persons, especially those least able to protect themselves: children in low-income families, people with disabilities, victims of domestic violence, and people experiencing homelessness – all of whom will be affected by this change. The American Bar Association strongly supports the full and adequate funding of programs like the Housing Choice Voucher Program and opposes this unnecessarily strict approach to funding calculation by HUD. We understand that this approach actually runs counter to the discussions and debates on the Omnibus Consolidated Appropriations Act (P.L. 108-199).

We therefore urge you to take appropriate steps to ensure the continuity of assistance to affected families through corrective legislation, or any other means appropriate. We appreciate your steadfast support of affordable housing. We stand ready to assist you in any way that we can. If you have any questions, please ask your staff to contact our legislative counsel, Ken Goldsmith, at (202) 662-1789.

Sincerely,



Robert D. Evans