



February 24, 2020

Chairwoman Maxine Waters
House Financial Services Committee
United States House of Representatives
2221 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Ranking Member Patrick McHenry
House Financial Services Committee
United States House of Representatives
2004 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Chairman William Lacy Clay Jr.
Subcommittee on Housing
United States House of Representatives
2428 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Ranking Member Steve Stivers
Subcommittee on Housing
United States House of Representatives
2234 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Denny Heck
2452 Rayburn House Office Building
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Trey Hollingsworth
1641 Longworth House Office Building
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Waters, Ranking Member McHenry, Chairman Clay, Ranking Member Stivers, Representative Heck, and Representative Hollingsworth:

We write you today in support of Congressman Heck’s proposed Amendment in Nature of a Substitute to H.R. 4351, the *Yes in My Backyard (YIMBY) Act*. Similar to its counterpart in the Senate (S. 1919), the *YIMBY Act* encourages communities to eliminate discriminatory land use policies and remove barriers that prevent the production of needed housing in communities throughout the United States. It gives the federal government, through the Department of Housing and Urban Development, a constructive role to play in solving the housing shortage and affordability crisis.

The *YIMBY Act* requires Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) recipients to report the extent to which they are implementing specific pro-affordability and anti-discriminatory housing policies. Rather than requiring local governments to implement specific policies, the *YIMBY Act* will create a reporting requirement under the existing Consolidated Plan Reporting that would require localities to publicly detail policies that they are implementing pursuant to a specified list of options.

Consideration of the *YIMBY Act* comes at a critical time in the debate over housing affordability and availability. According to Up for Growth's 2018 report *Housing Underproduction in the U.S.*, the country failed to produce 7.3 million needed homes from 2000 to 2015. This shortage of homes means families pay more rent and face unnecessary barriers to jobs and amenities. Nearly half of the country's renter households are cost burdened, negatively impacting household budgets and preventing communities from achieving their desired economic potential.

Recognizing and eliminating exclusionary policies – zoning and density restrictions, onerous parking requirements, and other regulations – as well as uplifting pro-housing policies such as density bonuses and tax abatements for affordable housing are important steps to solving the national housing crisis. The *YIMBY Act* will help communities recognize their own agency in the housing shortage and provide them with a framework for smarter policymaking.

The bipartisan sponsorship of this bill demonstrates Congress's commitment to innovative solutions to improve the lives of American families and warrants passage. We look forward to working with you to advance this important piece of legislation and on other pro-housing policies.

Sincerely,

**American Planning Association
Commercial Real Estate Finance Council
Congress for New Urbanism
Council for Affordable and Rural Housing
Habitat for Humanity International
Housing Advisory Group
Leading Builders of America
Manufactured Housing Institute
Mortgage Bankers Association
National Apartment Association
National Association of Home Builders
National Association of REALTORS®
National Community Stabilization Trust
National Leased Housing Association (NLHA)
National Multifamily Housing Council
Prosperity Now
Real Estate Roundtable
Smart Growth America
Up for Growth Action
YIMBY Action**