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July 23, 2013

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein  
United States Senate  
331 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

**RE: Critical Transportation and Housing Funding for Cities**

Dear Senator Feinstein:

On behalf of the League of California Cities (League), I urge you to support the below critical programmatic funding for cities in the FY 2014 Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development (THUD) Appropriations bill and work to minimize significant cuts or elimination of these key programs.

**Community Development Block Grant Program**

The Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG) is targeted for drastic funding cuts in the House committee-approved THUD bill. The bill would fund CDBG at \$1.6 billion, a **48% cut**. Just a few short years ago, this program was funded at \$4.5 billion.

The need for CDBG funding in California has never been greater. CDBG grants provide critical funding for community development projects in California cities, which have been severely impacted by the national mortgage foreclosure crisis and the elimination of \$5 billion in local redevelopment funding that financed vital housing and community development projects. CDBG is a smart, long-term investment in our nation's communities. When fully funded, California cities receive over \$345 million annually to invest in our communities. Further, for every one dollar of CDBG funds another three dollars in private and public investment is leveraged. This equates to over \$1 billion dollars being directed into areas hit hard by economic turmoil.

**HOME Investment Partnership Program**

Like CDBG, the HOME program is targeted for a major cut in the House THUD bill, with proposed funding at \$700 million compared to \$950 million in FY 2013, which we urge as the minimum level for HOME. We encourage you to use the FY 2013 funding as the minimum level for HOME.

The HOME program provides important formula grants to states and localities that communities use to build, buy, and/or rehabilitate affordable housing for rent or homeownership, or provide direct rental assistance to low-income people. Enacted in 1990, HOME recently celebrated the completion of one million units of affordable housing.

## **Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery Program (TIGER)**

We urge full funding for the TIGER program, which is very much needed to repair and improve California's crumbling transportation infrastructure system, reduce congestion to increase goods movement to achieve economic growth and create jobs in California cities.

The House THUD bill eliminates all funding for the TIGER program, which provides competitive funding opportunities for local governments to improve regional mobility and goods movement through coordinated and multi-jurisdictional transportation planning and project execution. The program is the only new, significant federal investment source that has been made available to assist local governments implement critically needed transportation improvement projects.

## **Sustainable Communities Initiative Programs**

Like TIGER, the House THUD bill proposes to eliminate all funding for this critical program. We encourage you to reject this proposal and continue funding for this important program.

The Sustainable Communities Regional Planning and Community Challenge grant programs support local and regional transportation and land use planning efforts that seek to increase mobility and community access, improve air quality and public health and create jobs. This funding is helping California cities increase efficiencies in local resource use as we work to organize local redevelopment and transportation planning that will maximize benefit to our communities, decrease congestion and improve local goods movement.

Thank you for your attention to the concerns of California cities on this critical funding request. Please contact me or the League's Washington advocate, Eve O'Toole, at (202) 419-2505 with any questions. We look forward to continuing to work with you on California's important local priority issues.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Chris McKenzie".

Chris McKenzie  
Executive Director