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United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

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The Honorable Susan Collins
Chairman
Subcommittee on Transportation,
Housing, and Urban Development
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Jack Reed
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Transportation,
Housing, and Urban Development
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairwoman Collins and Ranking Member Reed:

I am writing to express my support for your longstanding commitment to ending veteran homelessness through funding for the Department of Housing and Urban Development. As you draft a Fiscal Year 2016 (FY16) appropriations bill for the Department of Transportation and the Department of Housing and Urban Development (T-HUD), I urge you to continue your advocacy on behalf of our nation's veterans and provide robust funding for programs that serve homeless veterans.

The Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) voucher program has been instrumental in the effort to end veteran homelessness, and I am concerned that the President's budget request does not include funding for any additional VASH vouchers. Connecticut currently has 679 VASH vouchers and all but twelve of them are obligated. Since the number of young veterans requesting housing services has increased in recent years, and since that trend is expected to continue, it is imperative that Congress allocate funding to provide additional VASH vouchers. Given this program's importance to Connecticut, I urge you to include funding for an appropriate number of new VASH vouchers in the FY16 T-HUD appropriations bill.

Though the VASH voucher program has a proven track record of success, it is also important to provide funding for programs that can help veterans who might be ineligible for VASH vouchers. That is why I was proud to support the President's budget request calling for \$21.1 billion in funding for Tenant-Based Rental Assistance vouchers. The President has proposed targeting 30,000 vouchers to assist subpopulations including veterans who are ineligible for the VASH program, and I urge you to honor this request as well.

Thank you for your leadership on this issue, and for your consideration of my request. I share your goal of making a strong commitment to the VASH program, and other programs that serve homeless veterans. We must make every effort to provide housing services for every person who has served our country.

Sincerely,



Richard Blumenthal
United States Senate