

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

January 30, 2019

The Honorable Ben Carson  
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development  
451 7th Street, Southwest  
Washington, D.C. 20410

Dear Secretary Carson,

We are writing to express our deep concern regarding the effects of the government shutdown on nonprofits that rely on grant funding from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The recent lapse in appropriations caused financial strain for the valuable, often lifesaving work of nonprofits in Connecticut that offer support for vulnerable families, women, and children. We seek your commitment to ensuring HUD will take the appropriate steps to provide these nonprofits with the allocated grant money they missed as a result of the shutdown.

On January 22, 2019, we visited the Prudence Crandall Center (PCC) in New Britain, Connecticut. At PCC, we saw firsthand the devastating impacts of the shutdown on domestic violence support services that rely on grant funding from HUD. PCC provides emergency shelter housing and services to women, men, and children who have experienced domestic violence. It also offers individual and group counseling, court-based services, training and community education to reduce domestic violence, and child rehabilitative services. It is one of two centers of its kind in the state of Connecticut.

PCC receives HUD funding through the Continuum of Care (CoC) Program for transitional and permanent supportive housing. PCC submits monthly expense reports to HUD and is able to receive \$45,000 a month, according to their contract. In the light of the shutdown, PCC was unable to draw funds to cover expenses for January 2019.

The shutdown directly affected children on the brink of homelessness. For example, Noank Community Support Services (NCSS), headquartered in Groton, Connecticut, was unable to sustain the vital programs it provides to its communities' homeless youth populations. NCSS receives grant money through HUD's Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program to support a homeless shelter program for eighteen to twenty-four year olds. According to the grant, NCSS was expected to receive funds on November 1, 2018. However, HUD failed to process the paperwork before the government shutdown. NCSS had already launched its program and was forced to rely on its own funds in absence of the grant money from HUD.

The duration of the shutdown threatened NCSS's ability to sustain its vital services to struggling youth through group homes in the state. In addition to this program, NCSS provides

support for children and young adults, including foster youth, who have suffered from trauma, are mentally ill, or are at risk for substance abuse, dropping out of school, or teenage pregnancy.

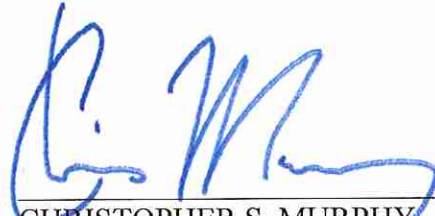
This shutdown could have caused irreparable damage to many critical programs and stalled the progress for families and individuals looking to mend their lives after suffering from traumatic experiences. As such, we write to you seeking assurances from HUD that recipients of grants, like PCC and NCSS, will be paid in full – including reimbursement for any non-grant funds that were used in lieu of promised grant funding – now that the government is reopened. We also strongly urge you to not penalize grantees for fronting costs in the absence of the promised grant funding.

I look forward to hearing from you on this important matter.

Sincerely,



RICHARD BLUMENTHAL  
United States Senate



CHRISTOPHER S. MURPHY  
United States Senate