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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4709

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Dear Friends,

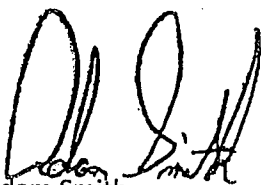
Although I am unable to attend today's event, and speak to you in person, I would like to take this opportunity to celebrate the groundbreaking of the Mt Baker Village Preservation project. I am thrilled to see projects like this one, which protect the residents and rich cultures of our many communities. Effective grassroots efforts, paired with common-sense federal legislation, are crucial towards addressing pressing housing issues.

Many in our region and throughout the United States, struggle to maintain housing in the face of persistent economic hardship. Living expenses are increasingly beyond the reach of many hardworking Americans. 87,000 people in Washington face homelessness, and more than half of all adults say they have made at least one large trade-off in order to cover their rent or mortgage. Such trade-offs may include postponing grocery shopping, taking second jobs, forgoing a secondary degree, or cutting back on health care. No one should have to make these compromises.

A growing number of our neighbors and friends are without a safe, clean, and permanent place to call home. Meanwhile, local homeless assistance programs operate at maximum capacity. Frequent moves, overcrowding, and the threat of eviction or foreclosure — are far too common, particularly in the refugee and immigrant communities. Housing instability must become a congressional priority.

I firmly support an increase in funding for programs that provide assistance to individuals experiencing or facing homelessness. I supported funding for Opening Doors, which is a comprehensive strategy contributing nearly \$6 billion to federal agencies and grant programs. These programs provide affordable housing needs, educational opportunities, counseling, and vital health care services to individuals striving to transition out of homelessness. I also voted to increase funding to the McKinney-Vento homeless assistance grants. These grants provide critical support to state and local homeless shelters and emergency re-housing services; all of which have seen steep cuts to funding in recent years due to sequestration. Congress must make grants like these a priority. These efforts, and much more are necessary in order to solve our most pressing housing issues.

Once again, thank you for the invitation to attend today's event, and for the opportunity to say a few words. I am honored to represent this District and to fight for the resources needed to address homelessness and housing affordability. If my office can ever be of assistance to you in the future, please do not hesitate to reach out to my District Office.



Adam Smith
Member of Congress