

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

February 13, 2026

The Honorable Robert Aderholt
Chair
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education, and Related Agencies
House Committee on Appropriations
2358-B Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa L. DeLauro
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education, and Related Agencies
House Committee on Appropriations
1036 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chair Aderholt and Ranking Member DeLauro:

In every American community — rural, suburban, and urban — children and youth experience homelessness. Public schools reported more than 1.5 million children and youth experiencing homelessness in the 2023-2024 academic year. An additional 680,000 children under age six experiencing homelessness. At least one in thirty adolescents ages 13 to 17 and nearly one in 10 young adults ages 18 to 24 are estimated to experience homelessness on their own each year. The number of families in homeless shelters and visibly unsheltered increased by 39.4 percent in 2024, following a 16 percent increase in 2023, while the number of unaccompanied youth in homeless shelters and visibly unsheltered increased by 10 percent, after a 15 percent increase in the previous year.

To help children and youth recover from the impacts of homelessness, we must invest in programs that are uniquely able to identify and serve them. As you consider appropriations for Fiscal Year (FY) 2027, we urge you to provide strong support for the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (RHYA) program, administered by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), and the McKinney-Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY) program, administered by the U.S. Department of Education. These are the only two federal programs focused specifically on child and youth homelessness.

RHYA programs are vital to prevent trafficking, identify and support survivors, and provide critical services to runaway, homeless, and disconnected youth. Community-based RHYA programs — including street outreach programs, emergency shelters for minors, transitional living programs, and maternity group homes for pregnant and parenting youth — are lifelines for youth in the most vulnerable situations. These programs empower youth and young parents experiencing homelessness by connecting them to education, employment, and family reconnection services, giving them the tools they need to transition into stable, independent adulthood.

In FY26, RHYA was funded at \$146.3 million, which equals an investment of a mere \$34 per year per young person experiencing homelessness in America. This level of funding falls short of addressing the growing and urgent needs of young people in our communities. For FY27, we call on Congress to provide \$304 million to allow local programs to reach far more young people and families. Currently, only 25 percent of RHYA applicants are awarded grants due to chronic

underfunding, and many more long-time providers are set to lose funding following HHS' decision to not solicit applications for the Street Outreach Program in 2025. By increasing RHYA funding, we can move closer to ensuring that every homeless youth has access to the supportive services and housing options they need to thrive.

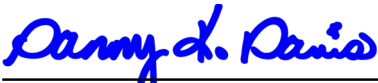
Additionally, since 2008, RHYA has called for an estimate of incidence and prevalence of youth homelessness to be conducted every five years. To date, due to a lack of dedicated federal resources, such an estimate has only been conducted one time and findings were made public in 2018. A total appropriation of \$304 million for RHYA, with an additional \$4 million targeted toward a regular and reliable youth count in FY27, will help update the incidence and prevalence estimate and ensure that federal programs that support homeless youth are well-targeted and grounded in evidence-based practices. Given the heightened need for services, the \$4 million should be in addition to current RHYA funding and not taken from program grants.

Similarly, the EHCY program is the only federal education program that removes barriers caused by homelessness to school enrollment, attendance, and completion. These barriers include: being unable to meet enrollment requirements; high mobility resulting in lack of continuity and absenteeism; lack of transportation; lack of supplies; poor health, fatigue, and hunger; and emotional and mental health issues. Nationally, only 20 percent of local educational agencies receive EHCY subgrants due to lack of funding, which limits the ability of schools to identify homeless students, ensure their access to school, and connect them to community support.

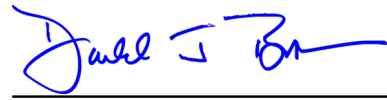
While the most recent level of funding for EHCY in FY26 was \$129 million, a bipartisan amendment to the American Rescue Plan provided \$800 million to support the identification, enrollment, and school participation of children and youth experiencing homelessness, including wrap-around services. A federally-funded study found that this significant one-time investment of dedicated federal funding helped school districts identify homeless students, and led to improved educational outcomes: reduced rates of chronic absenteeism, higher 4-year graduation rates, and gains in reading, mathematics, and science proficiency. To build on these achievements, we support \$200 million in FY27 funding for the EHCY program.

Investing in a young person's life enables them to avoid chronic homelessness, intergenerational cycles of poverty, and pervasive instances of trauma. These investments also allow them to join the competitive workforce and contribute to our economy, experience the benefits of socioeconomic mobility, become leaders of their communities, and participate as civically engaged citizens. We therefore urge you to support these strong funding levels for EHCY and RHYA programs in the FY27 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill. Thank you for your consideration of this request and for your support of programs to help solve child and youth homelessness.

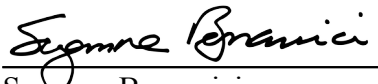
Sincerely,



Danny K. Davis
Member of Congress



Don Bacon
Member of Congress



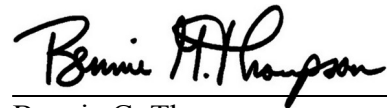
Suzanne Bonamici
Member of Congress



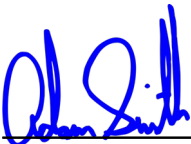
Brian K. Fitzpatrick
Member of Congress



Jimmy Panetta
Member of Congress



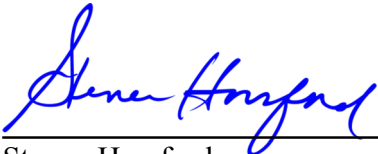
Bennie G. Thompson
Member of Congress



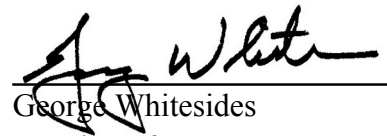
Adam Smith
Member of Congress



Val Hoyle
Member of Congress



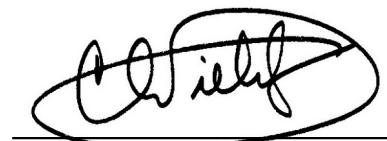
Steven Horsford
Member of Congress



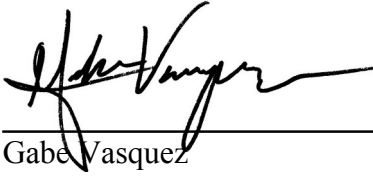
George Whitesides
Member of Congress



John Garamendi
Member of Congress



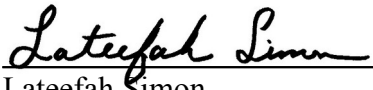
Cleo Fields
Member of Congress



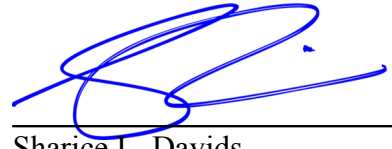
Gabe Vasquez
Member of Congress



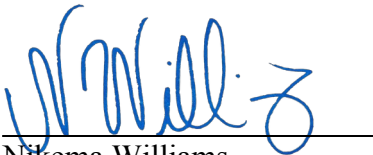
Maxwell Alejandro Frost
Member of Congress



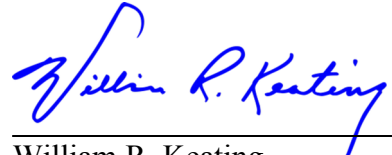
Lateefah Simon
Member of Congress



Sharice L. Davids
Member of Congress



Nikema Williams
Member of Congress



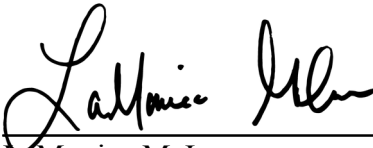
William R. Keating
Member of Congress



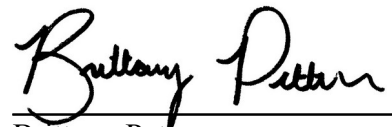
Rashida Tlaib
Member of Congress



Josh Riley
Member of Congress



LaMonica McIver
Member of Congress



Brittany Pettersen
Member of Congress



Eric Swalwell
Member of Congress



Lloyd Doggett
Member of Congress



Terri A. Sewell
Member of Congress



Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress



Steve Cohen
Member of Congress



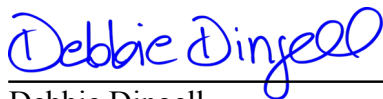
Chellie Pingree
Member of Congress



Nellie Pou
Member of Congress



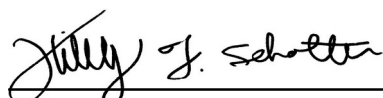
Stephen F. Lynch
Member of Congress



Debbie Dingell
Member of Congress



Adenta S. Grijalva
Member of Congress



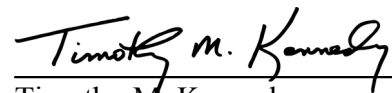
Hillary J. Scholten
Member of Congress



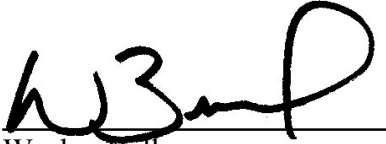
Diana DeGette
Member of Congress



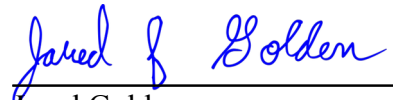
Kevin Mullin
Member of Congress



Timothy M. Kennedy
Member of Congress



Wesley Bell
Member of Congress



Jared Golden
Member of Congress



Joe Courtney
Member of Congress



Brendan F. Boyle
Member of Congress



Dina Titus
Member of Congress



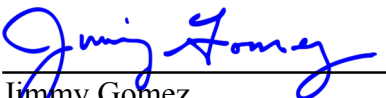
Pramila Jayapal
Member of Congress



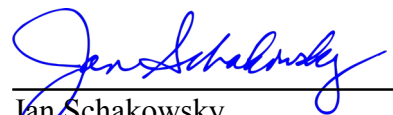
Alma S. Adams, Ph.D.
Member of Congress



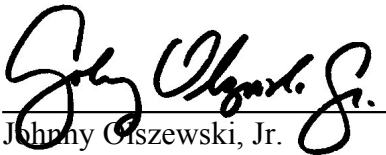
Dwight Evans
Member of Congress



Jimmy Gomez
Member of Congress



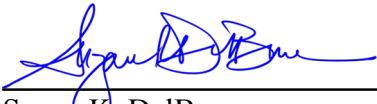
Jan Schakowsky
Member of Congress



Johnny Ciszewski, Jr.
Member of Congress



Chris Deluzio
Member of Congress



Suzan K. DelBene
Member of Congress



Jim Costa
Member of Congress



Yvette D. Clarke
Member of Congress



Joe Neguse
Member of Congress



Delia C. Ramirez
Member of Congress



Lori Trahan
Member of Congress



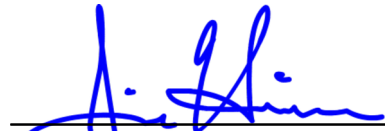
Mary Gay Scanlon
Member of Congress



Morgan McGarvey
Member of Congress



Lucy McBath
Member of Congress



Jim Himes
Member of Congress



Sheila Cherfilus-McCormick
Member of Congress



Dan Goldman
Member of Congress



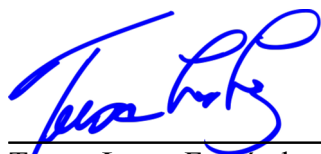
Julia Brownley
Member of Congress



Gwen S. Moore
Member of Congress



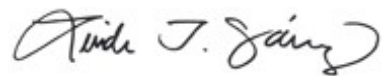
Laura Friedman
Member of Congress



Teresa Leger Fernández
Member of Congress



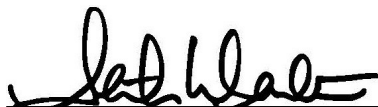
Kim Schrier, M.D.
Member of Congress



Linda T. Sánchez
Member of Congress



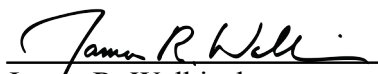
Bill Foster
Member of Congress



SETH MOULTON
Member of Congress



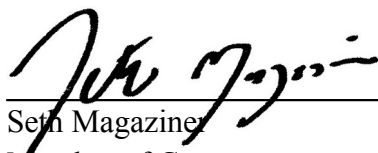
Derek T. Tran
Member of Congress



James R. Walkinshaw
Member of Congress



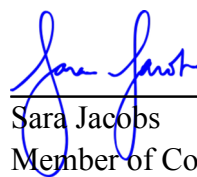
Angie Craig
Member of Congress



Seth Magaziner
Member of Congress



Robin L. Kelly
Member of Congress



Sara Jacobs
Member of Congress



Jason Crow
Member of Congress



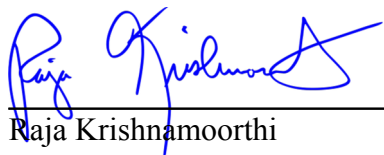
Stacey E. Plaskett
Member of Congress



Ro Khanna
Member of Congress



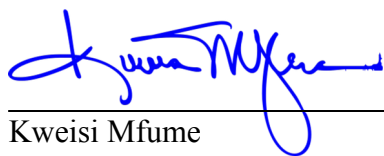
Andrea Salinas
Member of Congress



Raja Krishnamoorthi
Member of Congress



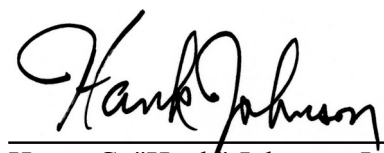
Maxine Waters
Ranking Member
Committee on Financial
Services



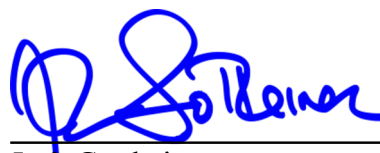
Kweisi Mfume
Member of Congress



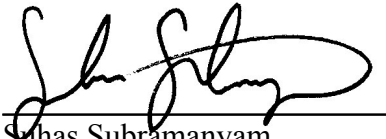
Nanette Diaz Barragán
Member of Congress



Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.
Member of Congress



Josh Gottheimer
Member of Congress



Suhas Subramanyam
Member of Congress



Gabe Amo
Member of Congress



Summer L. Lee
Member of Congress



Ritchie Torres
Member of Congress



Frederica S. Wilson
Member of Congress



David Scott
Member of Congress



Jasmine Crockett
Member of Congress



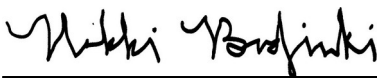
Marilyn Strickland
Member of Congress



Jesús G. "Chuy" García
Member of Congress



Mark Takano
Member of Congress



Nikki Budzinski
Member of Congress



Shontel M. Brown
Member of Congress



Ilhan Omar
Member of Congress



Ted W. Lieu
Member of Congress



Troy A. Carter, Sr.
Member of Congress



Andre Carson
Member of Congress



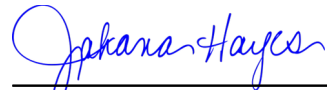
Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez
Member of Congress



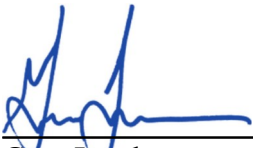
Becca Balint
Member of Congress



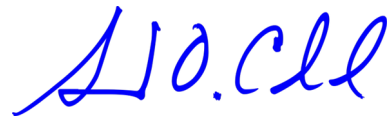
Scott H. Peters
Member of Congress



Jahana Hayes
Member of Congress



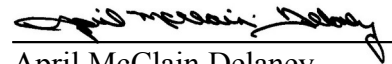
Greg Landsman
Member of Congress



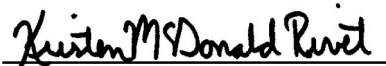
Salud Carbajal
Member of Congress



Sean Casten
Member of Congress



April McClain Delaney
Member of Congress



Kristen McDonald Rivet
Member of Congress



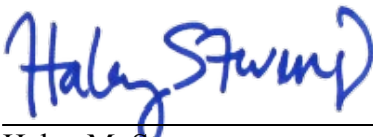
Thomas R. Suozzi
Member of Congress



Joyce Beatty
Member of Congress



Paul D. Tonko
Member of Congress



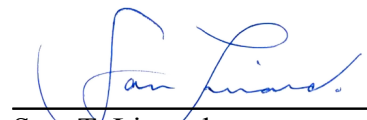
Haley M. Stevens
Member of Congress



Ami Bera
Member of Congress



Chris Pappas
Member of Congress



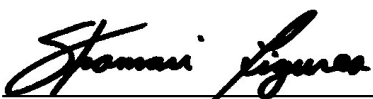
Sam T. Liccardo
Member of Congress



Joaquin Castro
Member of Congress



Sydney Kamlager-Dove
Member of Congress



Shomari Figures
Member of Congress



Greg Casar
Member of Congress



Kelly Morrison
Member of Congress



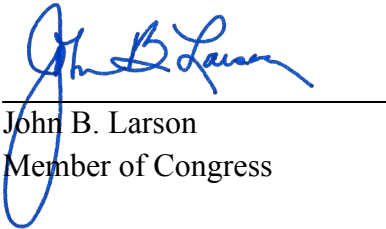
Shri Thanedar
Member of Congress



Yassamin Ansari
Member of Congress



Maxine Dexter
Member of Congress



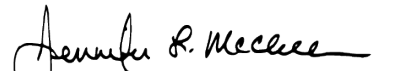
John B. Larson
Member of Congress



Doris Matsui
Member of Congress



Sylvia R. Garcia
Member of Congress



Jennifer L. McClellan
Member of Congress



Jerrold Nadler
Member of Congress



Melanie Stansbury
Member of Congress



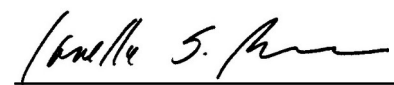
Jake Auchincloss
Member of Congress



Sarah McBride
Member of Congress



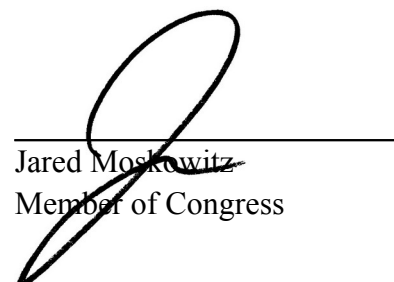
Gilbert Ray Cisneros, Jr.
Member of Congress



Janelle S. Bynum
Member of Congress



Mark DeSaulnier
Member of Congress



Jared Moskowitz
Member of Congress



Robert Garcia
Member of Congress



Donald G. Davis
Member of Congress



Valerie P. Foushee
Member of Congress



Darren Soto
Member of Congress



James P. McGovern
Member of Congress



Deborah K. Ross
Member of Congress



Vicente Gonzalez
Member of Congress



Ayanna Pressley
Member of Congress



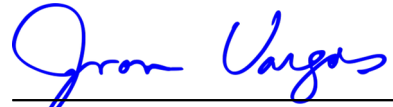
Frank Pallone, Jr.
Member of Congress



Chrissy Houlahan
Member of Congress



Robert J. Menendez
Member of Congress



Juan Vargas
Member of Congress



Eric Sorensen
Member of Congress



Rick Larsen
Member of Congress



James C. Moylan
Member of Congress