

TESTIMONY FOR THE RECORD
House Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies
(THUD)

CONGRESSWOMAN DELIA C. RAMIREZ (IL-03)

MEMBER DAY: March 25, 2026

Thank you, Chair Womack and Ranking Member Clyburn, for inviting Members to provide input into the Appropriations process and written testimony on the agencies and programs under the jurisdiction of the Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development, and Related Programs Subcommittee.

I want to start by acknowledging the important work of this committee. We know that investing in our infrastructure is an investment in **the safety and well-being of our communities, the economic development of our region, and thriving futures for our families**. The funds you designate and the programs you protect significantly impact our constituents' quality of life.

In Illinois, the list of needs is extensive. Over 1 million lead water service lines must be replaced to protect the health of Illinois communities— 400,000 in the City of Chicago alone. Nine percent of our bridges, mainly in rural communities, need repairs. A severe and worsening affordable housing shortage, which would require funding for at least 300,000 new units. And my district desperately needs funding to expand our rail system and address rail and road security concerns to protect our families, our environment, and our infrastructure.

Grant programs like the CRISI (Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements), the Federal Railroad Administration's National Railroad Partnership (NRP), the Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD), the Low or No Emission Grant, the Grants for Buses and Bus Facilities Competitive Program, and the Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) meaningfully improve the lives of our constituents by investing in the infrastructure of our communities. These programs connect communities, reduce congestion, improve public transit, and spur economic development.

Housing is also an essential component of public infrastructure, providing a secure social and economic foundation for our communities. That is why I am deeply concerned about the attacks on HUD, including the efforts to upend long-standing policy and prohibit families with mixed immigration status from receiving housing assistance or living in federal housing programs like public housing and Section 8. These attacks are not just an assault on working families. They are an assault on the civil rights of and legal protections for historically marginalized communities.

This committee has long allocated resources to ensure that federal law, which allows families with mixed immigration status to live together while eligible family members receive HUD housing assistance, is upheld. Because we understand our neighborhoods thrive when everyone, no matter where they come from or how long they've lived here, has a safe, affordable place to call home. But Trump's proposal would separate families, increase homelessness, and make it harder for communities across our state to address the housing crisis. And it is imperative that we address the crisis when:

- 114 million people rent in the United States, and more than half spend over 30% of their income on housing costs alone.
- Among people with the lowest incomes, three in four (75%) spend over half of their income on housing every month.
- Rents have skyrocketed since the COVID 19 Pandemic and are not showing signs of slowing down, given the impacts of Trump's tariffs and his illegal wars abroad.
- There is no state or Congressional district in the country with enough affordable, available rental homes for tenants with the lowest incomes.

If the President is serious about addressing the housing crisis and ensuring every American has a safe and stable place to call home, he should work with Congress to make significant new investments in the federal housing programs, including programs like the Housing Opportunities for Persons with Aids (HOPWA) and the Fair Housing Initiatives Program.

I urge you to fight for adequate and sustained funding for housing programs, while also defining Congressional intent for the funds to protect them from further misguided action by the Trump Administration. We have the resources to ensure that all of us, immigrants or otherwise, have the freedom to live where we want and to take care of our families, without fear of eviction.