United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

January 23, 2014

The Honorable Mel Watt
Director
Federal Housing Finance Agency
400 7th St., SW
Washington, DC 20024

Dear Director Watt:

We write first to congratulate you on being confirmed and sworn in as Director of the Federal Housing Finance Agency (FHFA). We also share your concern about the need for more affordable rental housing in this country and ask that you end the suspension of contributions to the National Housing Trust Fund (NHTF) and the Capital Magnet Fund (CMF) in a manner fully consistent with all applicable laws, rules, and regulations.

The affordable rental housing crisis that prompted Congress, on a bipartisan basis, to create the NHTF and CMF has only gotten worse in the last five years. Since passage of the Housing and Economic Recovery Act in 2008, the number of homes that are affordable to renters with incomes at or below 30 percent of area median income decreased by more than 1 million units. According to the Harvard Joint Center for Housing Studies, there is currently a national shortage of nearly 5 million units affordable and available to extremely low-income renters. Funding the NHTF and CMF would help ameliorate this crisis.

We are all committed to reforming the mortgage finance system and do not believe Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac should be returned to their previous form. However, directing much needed funding for affordable rental housing should not wait until Congress and the President are able to agree on a new system. The time is long overdue to lift the current suspension of contributions to the NHTF and CMF, and we ask your full and fair consideration of our request.

We look forward to hearing from you in a timely fashion and working with you as FHFA Director on this and other important matters.

Sincerely,

Jack Reed

Barbara Boxer

Elizabeth Warren

Bernard Sanders

Debbie Stabenow

Amy Klobuchar

Dianne Feinstein

Al Franken

Barbara Mikulski

Jeanne Shaheen

Robert Menendez

Richard Blumenthal

Tom Udall

Sherrod Brown

Dick Durbin

Tom Harkin

Ben Cardin

Sheldon Whitehouse

Mark Udall

Charles Schumer

Jeffrey A. Merkley

Carl Levin

Edward J. Markey

Patty Murray

Brian Schatz

[illegible]	Kirsten Gillibrand
Patrick Leahy	Bob Corker, Jr.
Mary L Landrieu	