



The Nation's Voice on Mental Illness

June 28, 2007

The Honorable Barney Frank
Chairman, Committee on Financial Services
U.S. House of Representatives
2128 Rayburn Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Frank:

On behalf of the 210,000 members and 1,200 affiliates of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), I am writing to offer our strong support for the National Housing Trust Fund (NHTF) legislation you and your colleagues are introducing today. As the nation's largest organization representing people with disabilities we are proud to support this important proposal for expanding access to affordable rental housing for individuals and families with extremely low incomes.

NAMI is pleased to join our colleague national disability organizations in the Consortium for Citizens With Disabilities (CCD) in supporting this legislation. CCD and the Technical Assistance Collaborative (TAC) recently released the "Priced Out in 2006" report documenting that people with severe disabilities living on Supplemental Security Income (SSI) are on average at only 18 percent area median income (AMI) national. Further, this "Priced Out" found that people on SSI are forced to pay, on average, 113 percent of their monthly income to rent a modest 1-bedroom apartment, and 100 percent of their monthly income for an efficiency unit. Clearly, people with severe disabilities face the most extreme worst case housing needs are in the most need of affordable rental housing.

The NHTF proposal you are introducing today is a major step forward in addressing the affordable rental housing needs of people with mental illness and other disabilities. NAMI and our colleagues in CCD congratulate you on this important legislation. We look forward to helping you move it toward passage in 2007.

Sincerely,

Michael J. Fitzpatrick, M.S.W.
Executive Director

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