



# SAN JUAN COUNTY COMMISSION

Lori Maughan                      Chair  
Jamie Harvey                      Vice-Chair  
Silvia Stubbs                      Commissioner  
Mack McDonald                      Administrator  
February 11, 2026

Re: Letter of Support – Housing for the 21st Century Act

Hon. Mike Kennedy  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC, 20515

Dear Congressman Kennedy:

On behalf of the San Juan County Board of Commissioners, we respectfully request your support for advancing the House Financial Services Committee's *Housing for the 21st Century Act*.

San Juan County reflects many of the defining features of the national housing affordability crisis. Hard-working residents are struggling to secure stable housing for their families, while local leaders are forced to stretch limited resources to assist those most in need. At the same time, our economy is being constrained by a severe shortage of workforce housing. Mineral extraction companies operating in the region are finding it increasingly difficult to meet production demands or expansion because they cannot attract or retain employees without available workforce housing.

Compounding this challenge, the expansion of the overnight rental market has significantly reduced the supply of housing traditionally available to residents; particularly teachers, first responders, and public-sector employees. Even our federal partners face substantial hiring challenges, at times resorting to extraordinary measures such as allowing skilled employees to live in on-site recreational vehicles due to the lack of available housing.

Against this backdrop, we are encouraged to see Congress addressing housing affordability with strong bipartisan support and a clear emphasis on empowering local housing partners. The strength of this legislation lies in its holistic, community-centered approach. We share the sponsors' recognition that no single solution will resolve the housing crisis; rather, meaningful progress requires a coordinated set of tools to reduce barriers and increase supply.

We would like to highlight several provisions of the bill that are particularly critical to meeting San Juan County's housing needs:

- Expansion of the Home Investment Partnerships (HOME) Program to better address workforce housing gaps.
- Establishment of common-sense exemptions for HOME-funded projects, including streamlined National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements, enabling communities to deliver affordable housing more quickly and cost-effectively.
- Authorization of new construction under the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, providing a valuable local-option tool to expand housing supply.
- Incentives for voluntary review of local housing strategies, including innovation grants for regional development consortia to modernize zoning frameworks and strengthen interlocal cooperation in support of smart growth.
- Expansion of eligibility for veterans' housing services through the HUD-VASH program.

These provisions represent thoughtful, targeted reforms that enhance local housing capacity without imposing unnecessary federal micromanagement. While additional work remains, the *Housing for the 21st Century Act* is a meaningful and constructive step toward ensuring stable housing for residents of San Juan County and communities like ours across the nation.

Thank you for your consideration and for your continued leadership on this critical issue.

Respectfully,

Lori Maughan, Commission Chair