Dear Chairman Latham and Ranking Member Pastor:

Thank you for your continued leadership in supporting our economic recovery through investment in local job creation, affordable housing and transit-oriented development. As you prepare the FY14 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill, we strongly encourage you to support programs that encourage interagency cooperation, reduce bureaucratic red tape, and support community efforts to improve economic resilience. In particular, we ask you to include $75 million for "Integrated Planning and Investment Strategy Grants" in your final Transportation-Housing and Urban Development appropriations bill.

This program will build on the Administration’s efforts to support the economic recovery and build stronger more resilient communities. The new Office of Economic Resilience (OER) within the Office of Community Planning and Development, fosters local innovative programs which strengthen and diversify their economies by effectively aligning and deploying federal, state and local funding for development and infrastructure.

OER will work in partnership with other federal agencies like Departments of Commerce, Transportation, Agriculture, the Environmental Protection Agency and others - to build the capacity of local regional and state governments in order to foster collaboration and prepare and execute data-driven community economic development and infrastructure investment strategies. In addition, they will work with other agencies to streamline government regulation and assist local communities in developing economic growth strategies that incorporate community development, transportation and housing, into both short and long-term economic plans. It focuses on repairing our aging infrastructure and reducing infrastructure costs, providing housing and transportation options that save on commute times and lower combined housing/transportation costs, and putting Americans back to work by focusing on job creation and workforce development.

Funding for the Office of Economic Resilience will spur private sector activity and job growth in rural, suburban, and urban communities across the country. It is more important than ever for the federal government to invest in programs that will encourage inter-agency collaboration at federal and local levels, foster private sector growth, and reduce red tape, while helping our communities grow and remain competitive in a changing economy. These grants will focus on
supporting actionable economic development strategies that reduce redundancy and use resources across the federal government more efficiently in support of economic resilience.

Thank you for your consideration. We appreciate your hard work.

Sincerely,

Ed Perlmutter
Member of Congress

Earl Blumenauer
Member of Congress

Emanuel Cleaver, II
Member of Congress

Jim Moran
Member of Congress

Michael Capuano
Member of Congress

David Cicilline
Member of Congress

Lois Capps
Member of Congress