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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND
URBAN AFFAIRS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6075

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December 9, 2019

Mr. David C. Woll
Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for
Community Planning and Development
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
451 Seventh Street S.W.
Washington, DC 20410

Dear Mr. Woll:

I am writing to you out of concern about the direction that this Administration appears to be going in addressing homelessness. Since you appeared before the Committee on November 20, the Administration has selected an individual to become the new head of the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) whose policy positions have caused alarm among those working to end homelessness across the country. The Administration's pick, Robert Marbut, has advocated a number of troubling policies with regard to homelessness, such as banning charities from providing food to people experiencing homelessness, and rejecting evidence-based policies that have worked to reduce homelessness. Mr. Marbut's selection comes on top of reporting that the Administration is considering a "crackdown" on homelessness and reports that the Administration is developing an Executive Order on homelessness.

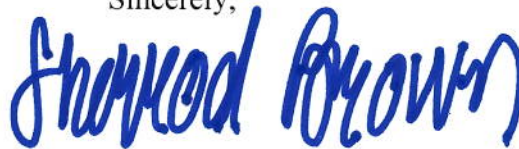
In your current role, you are the top political appointee overseeing U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) homelessness programs and policy. You have also served as HUD's representative to the USICH, which coordinates the federal response to homelessness and partners with communities across the country to prevent and end homelessness. Given your critical role in HUD's, and the nation's, homelessness policy, please provide answers to the following questions by December 13, 2019:

- a. In your current capacity, have you been working with other Administration officials to develop an Executive Order or other new initiative to address homelessness?
- b. To your knowledge, has anyone else at HUD been working with other Administration officials to develop an Executive Order or other new initiative to address homelessness? If so, who?
- c. If you have been working on, or know of, such an Executive Order or initiatives:
 - i. What are the elements of this Executive Order or initiative?
 - ii. Is funding for additional affordable housing one of these elements?
 - iii. Do any of these elements include efforts to round up people living in homeless encampments?

- iv. Do any of these elements involve making federal property available as housing for homeless individuals and/or families?
 - v. If you are considering the use of federal property in this effort, how will you evaluate whether the property is suitable as a living facility for people experiencing homelessness?
- d. Are you or others working on this effort involving staff of HUD and/or other federal agencies who have experience working on homelessness in these discussions?
- e. Are you or others working on this effort reaching out to local and national stakeholders who have worked with communities to implement solutions to homelessness to inform your work? If so, who are these groups?
- f. Do you believe the Administration's requests to eliminate the CDBG, HOME, and Housing Trust Fund programs will help in the effort to address homelessness?
- g. I understand that it is possible that Mr. Marbut could be confirmed as the new leader of the USICH by vote of the Council as soon as the Council's next meeting on December 10, 2019. This important coordinating body should have strong, qualified leadership.
- i. As HUD's representative to the Council, is it important to you that the next Director is committed to policies based on the evidence and research about homelessness and its solutions?
 - ii. Do you support Housing First as a model for addressing homelessness?
 - iii. Will you attend the Council meeting on December 10th?
 - iv. As HUD's representative on the Council, do you plan to vote to confirm Mr. Marbut as the new head of the USICH if his appointment comes to a vote on December 10th?
 - v. If you do not plan to continue as HUD's representative to the Council, please state who will.

I look forward to your prompt response.

Sincerely,



Sherrod Brown

Ranking Member