



December 17, 2025

The Honorable French Hill
Chairman
House Financial Services Committee
US House of Representatives

The Honorable Maxine Waters
Ranking Member
House Financial Services Committee
US House of Representatives

Dear Chairman Hill and Ranking Member Waters:

The American Institute of Architects strongly supports the Committee's consideration and approval of a comprehensive, bipartisan package of bills to combat the housing crisis and reform and improve our laws.

Our country is experiencing a severe housing crisis that's impacting all Americans. Decades of underinvestment, rising building costs, and restrictive zoning have all limited development. Federal housing initiatives often use out-of-date administrative structures and bureaucratic procedures that not only slow the decision-making process but also impede policy implementation, delaying any real progress in addressing housing needs. Architects witness these challenges directly as complicated permitting, inconsistent code enforcement, and lengthy approval timelines undermine housing delivery and affordability.

Architects' Role

Architects play an essential role in designing safe, resilient, and cost-effective housing solutions. We contribute to the effectiveness of federal programs by utilizing creative design solutions and best practices. Our work prioritizes the health, safety, and welfare of the public through thoughtful planning and responsible building practices. Clear and streamlined processes from Congress would enable architects and partners to provide more houses efficiently while maintaining high quality and safety standards.

H.R.6644 - Housing for the 21st Century Act

We appreciate the inclusion of architects and architectural services in sections 101 and 103 of this bipartisan measure. These provisions will help ensure that federal housing

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supply frameworks and point-access block building guidelines are informed by on-the-ground design expertise, fire and life safety considerations, and real-world cost and constructability insights.

By formally engaging architects in the development of housing supply frameworks, this bill promotes evidence-based standards that can expand supply in high-cost markets while preserving safety, accessibility, and flexibility for families of all sizes. Likewise, the planning and implementation grants in section 203 will enable regional entities to modernize zoning, streamline regulatory processes, and strengthen inspection capacity, all of which are critical to unlocking new housing production and making innovative building types like point-access block buildings viable at scale.

Exempting certain affordable housing projects from Build America, Buy America requirements will also allow scarce affordable housing funds to stretch further, ensuring that more resources go directly into delivering safe, high-quality homes rather than avoidable compliance costs, while still supporting necessary infrastructure improvements in a targeted way.

AIA Recommendations

Overall, AIA is supportive of a comprehensive bill that does the following:

1. Streamline Federal Program Administration and Permitting

Congress should instruct HUD and other federal agencies to modernize and streamline the approval process for housing initiatives. Without sufficient approval, investors, developers, and municipal partners are unable to construct affordable housing and complete deals. These administrative burdens disproportionately affect the most needed projects in high-cost, underprivileged neighborhoods.

By updating environmental evaluations, implementing standardized digital reporting processes, and improving coordination between both federal and local authorities, the government can reduce unnecessary oversight and improve project delivery.

2. Encourage State and Local Zoning Reform Through Incentives

The AIA supports federal initiatives, like the proposed innovation fund, which incentivize cities and states to remove barriers to housing through forward-thinking

projects and streamlined land use policies. By promoting local land use flexibility, Congress can help expand housing supply and improve affordability nationwide.

3. Strengthen and Modernize Core Housing Programs

Reauthorizing and modernizing the HOME Investment Partnership Program would aid in increasing flexible funding for affordable housing creation as well as leveraging greater investment, in both the private and public sector. In a similar vein, expanding Community Development Block Grants would allow local authorities to address housing shortages. CDBG introduces bonus payments that are provided to counties with above-median growth housing rates. These additional funds allow counties to address infrastructure improvements, code enforcement, and transitional housing in underserved areas.

Conclusion

The AIA strongly supports the Committee's efforts to identify and address government impediments to housing production. Architects will be able to provide affordable, resilient, equitable housing that our communities urgently need by streamlined processes, upgrading programs, and targeting incentives. We look forward to a continued partnership with the House Financial Services Committee as you all continue to advance policies that enhance the nation's housing infrastructure.

Thank you for your continued leadership on this critical issue. If you have questions, please contact Brittany Meyer at Brittany.Meyer@aia.org or Erin Waldron at Erin.Waldron@aia.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Carole Wedge". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Carole" and last name "Wedge" clearly distinguishable.

Carole Wedge
Executive Vice President and CEO
American Institute of Architects