U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT
WASHINGTON, DC 20410-1000

ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR CONGRESSIONAL
AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

November 20, 2024

The Honorable Bob Casey
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senator Casey:

Thank you for your letter of interest and support for addressing hoarding disorder (HD) among older adults. I have reviewed *The Consequences of Clutter* and have a greater appreciation for the challenges that people with HD and their communities experience as well as the gaps in medical, social, and housing supports for people with the condition. The report offers three recommendations to HUD. HUD appreciates these recommendations and offers responses below each recommendation.

1. **HUD should offer technical assistance and training specific to hoarding behavior for landlords and public housing programs. Training and technical assistance should include an overview of the need to provide reasonable accommodation to people with HD. It should also include tips and evidence-based best practices for intervention, including harm reduction.**

   HUD routinely uses technical assistance resources to offer training and best practices to landlords and public housing agencies. To the extent practical, HUD will integrate tips, best practices, and the need for reasonable accommodation around HD in trainings focused on improving physical conditions, where relevant and appropriate. In addition to the resources referenced in *The Consequences of Clutter*, HUD has developed the following technical assistance materials relevant to HD:

   - HUD's Service Coordinators in Multifamily Housing Program Resource Guide and Online Learning Tool, a resource guide for HUD's Service Coordinators in Multifamily Housing program, which provides funding for service coordinators to assist older adults and persons with disabilities in obtaining the supportive services they need to live independently, specifically recommends that service coordinators and other property staff be trained in recognizing the signs of hoarding.
   - The Healthy Homes Program Guidance Manual, which offers guidance and tools to help users establish or improve healthy homes programs, includes a section on hoarding as part of Chapter 4: Housing-Related Health and Safety Hazard Assessment.
   - The HUD Archives contains additional information on hoarding.

1. **Federal departments should increase and improve how they track the impact of hoarding behavior. Improved data collection should include better data related**

to how hoarded households and rental properties affect first responders. It should also include better data related to how HD hinders the ability of older adults to access federal programs, such as public housing or housing assistance.

HUD does not currently have a way to collect systematic data on the impact of hoarding behavior on HUD-assisted households, landlords, and other stakeholders. HUD is in the process of implementing new data collection for its Housing Choice Voucher and Public Housing programs that will permit a better understanding of the circumstances under which households leave housing assistance, including through eviction, that might shed light on one aspect of the issue.

In addition, HUD's field and regional offices are likely to have insights into challenges associated with this issue that could be mined. Given the current lack of systematic data and the complexity of the issue, the best way to advance HUD's understanding of the challenges people experiencing HD face in accessing and retaining HUD-assisted housing would be for HUD's Office of Policy Development and Research (PD&R) to conduct a study on the topic. PD&R will propose a study on Housing and HD for consideration as part of its 2026 budget request. This study would include consultation with people experiencing HD and their families and would produce a set of recommendations for HUD to consider for how HUD programs and policies could better address the specific challenges associated with HD.

2. **The federal government, including HUD, should seek input from people with HD and their family members when considering new policies and initiatives related to the condition.**

HUD routinely seeks input from the public when considering new policies and initiatives via listening sessions, Advanced Notices of Proposed Rulemaking, and Requests for Information, among other methods. HUD will use one or more of these methods to seek input from people with HD and their family members, as well as other stakeholders such as advocacy organizations, as it considers new policies and initiatives in this area.

I hope you find this information helpful. Please let me know if I can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

Dr. Kimberly A. McClain

Dr. Kimberly A. McClain
Assistant Secretary for Congressional
and Intergovernmental Relations