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Proposed federal budget will worsen housing affordability in Montgomery and Prince George's Counties in Maryland

Silver Spring, Maryland (**March 19, 2019**) — The administration's 2020 budget request, released this month, proposes to eliminate funding for programs that support affordable housing, a move that would worsen the affordable housing shortage facing Montgomery and Prince George's Counties and communities across the United States.

"We want to make sure that people in our community have access to decent housing that doesn't force them to make impossible choices, like whether to pay their rent or buy food to eat," said John Paukstis, President & CEO. "If we do not speak up now, these measures could have tremendous and damaging impact on generations of families to come."

The budget proposed by the White House reduces or eliminates funding that Habitat uses to build and improve affordable housing. The Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), Home Investment Partnerships Program (HOME), Self-Help Homeownership Opportunity Program (SHOP), Section 4 program and Community Development Financial Institutions Fund (CDFI) are all slated for elimination.

AmeriCorps, a 25-year-old public service program that helps local and national organizations and agencies meet critical needs in the community is also slated for elimination. More than 10,000 AmeriCorps members have served their communities through Habitat, helping to build new affordable homes and rebuild those in disaster-stricken areas. Shuttering the Corporation for National and Community Service, which administers the program, would be a significant loss for Habitat and other organizations that rely on this substantial volunteer workforce.

Across the nation, 1 in 6 families pays more than 50% of their income on housing, 30% is considered affordable. In the Washington D.C. Metro area, a household working minimum wage jobs must work 3 jobs to afford fair market rent for a one-bedroom apartment. These federal housing programs allow Habitat, and other organizations, to help people build better lives for themselves and their families by giving them greater access to safe and affordable shelter.

“The funding for these programs really does strengthen the reach of Habitat’s work. We see the impact it has every single day. We sincerely hope that our elected officials will not lose sight of the important role these programs play in their communities,” said John Paukstis. “We strongly encourage our supporters and all advocates for affordable housing to contact their members of Congress and urge them to fight for adequate funding of these programs in the fiscal year 2020 budget.”

About Habitat for Humanity Metro Maryland, Inc.

Habitat for Humanity Metro Maryland, Inc. (HFHMM) is an affiliate of Habitat for Humanity International that serves Montgomery and Prince George’s Counties in Maryland. Since 1982, HFHMM has partnered with the community and low-income families living in substandard conditions to provide decent and affordable housing solutions. HFHMM supports the notion that good, stable housing matters for neighborhoods. Better quality of living leads to stronger citizens and families. Habitat for Humanity is about changing lives, one home at a time. Visit our website at www.HabitatMM.org.

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