

LATOYA CANTRELL, MAYOR  
CITY OF NEW ORLEANS

July 13, 2021

The Honorable Janet Yellen  
Secretary of the Treasury  
1500 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Room 3330  
Washington, DC 20220

**RE: EMERGENCY RENTAL ASSISTANCE FUNDING REQUEST**

Dear Secretary Yellen:

I am writing today for two purposes. First, on behalf of the City of New Orleans, thank you for your leadership in helping to administer resources from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), the CARES Act, and the other COVID relief legislation. Between the State and Local Relief Funds and Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) Program Funds from ARPA alone, our City and our citizens have been better positioned to weather and recover from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Before COVID-19, 55 percent of New Orleans residents paid more than 30 percent of their income on rent, making housing one of the most significant burdens for individuals and families. With the impact of COVID-19 on our tourism-dependent economy, it should be no surprise then that an incredible number of residents are concerned about possible eviction once the CDC eviction moratorium terminates. It is for this reason that the ERA programs from CARES (ERA1) and ARPA (ERA2) are so incredibly impactful for our community, with the City receiving 15,000 rental assistance applications since February 2021 alone. As a result of this demand, we have already approved applications committing the entirety of the first tranche of ERA1 funds (\$11,633,425) and the 40 percent allocation of ERA2 funds that the City has received (\$6,633,047). It is crucial to note that the additional flexibilities provided for ERA2 made it much simpler to get these funds into the hands of the individuals who need it most.

We appreciate your support of these programs, and we hope you would consider the following two requests so that we can best assist our citizens and ensure they can remain in their homes. First, we would sincerely appreciate any way for you to encourage the release of the second tranche of ERA1 funds (\$14,076,444) from the State of Louisiana as well as the remaining balance of the City's ERA2 funds (\$9,204,985). We would also very much appreciate if the same flexibilities afforded to ERA2 funds can be applied to unused ERA1 funds as well. This would allow us to ensure that potentially thousands of people are not displaced from their homes.

I appreciate your consideration of our suggestions, and I am available to provide any additional information. On behalf of the City of New Orleans, and other similarly-positioned cities nationwide, thank you again for your leadership.

Sincerely,



LaToya Cantrell  
Mayor, City of New Orleans

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