

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

April 3, 2026

The Honorable Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
200 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C., 20201

Russell Vought  
Director  
U.S. Office of Management and Budget  
725 17<sup>th</sup> Street NW  
Washington, D.C., 20503

Dear Secretary Kennedy and Director Vought:

We write to express our strong opposition to the illegal and unconstitutional decision by the Trump Administration to delay over \$810 million in funding for the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) program.

We are urging you to immediately release this vital funding so that over 48,000 Vermonters and 10 million people throughout America living in poverty can receive the help they desperately need to keep a roof over their heads, feed their families, keep their jobs, send their kids to child care and pay their energy bills. What we are asking you to do is simple and it is straightforward: Obey the law. Respect the Constitution. Do not let kids go hungry, do not force veterans to sleep out on the street, do not deny low-income seniors the emergency assistance they need to live with dignity and respect. Release these funds.

Nearly 1,000 community action agencies in nearly every county in America rely on this funding to provide urgent financial aid for working families with children, people with disabilities and seniors on fixed incomes. Half of these agencies also operate Head Start programs for early education and comprehensive services for young children, and more than half administer the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program that helps millions of Americans stay warm in the winter and cool in the summer.

Five of these community action agencies are located in our state of Vermont. These agencies recently served 3,200 Vermonters who did not have healthcare, 9,000 people who had a disability, over 7,000 low-income seniors, over 11,000 children living in poverty, and 1,200 veterans and active military personnel. And yet, none of these agencies have received the CSBG funding that they are required by law to receive for over three months. That is beyond unacceptable.

We are well aware that President Trump proposed to eliminate both the CSBG program and LIHEAP in his last budget request. But you should be more than aware that the Congress rejected the President's request and for good reason. These programs are literally a matter of life and death for some of the most vulnerable people in America. Congress funded them. The

President signed this funding into law. And, under our Constitution, you do not have the right to determine which laws you will follow and which laws you will ignore.

Your agencies have a legal obligation to administer and disburse CSBG funding as intended by Congress on time and without delay. Therefore, we urge you to immediately disburse CSBG funding as appropriated by Congress and allow community action agencies in Vermont and throughout America to continue serving millions of Americans who are hurting and in desperate need of financial assistance.

Please respond no later than one week from receiving this letter to inform us about the steps you are taking to allocate these funds to Vermont and every other state in America as required by law.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Bernard Sanders  
United States Senator



Becca Balint  
Member of Congress



Peter Welch  
United States Senator