THE NEW ENGLAND COUNCIL

The Honorable Scott Turner
Secretary
US Department of Housing and Urban Development
451 7th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20410

April 17, 2026

Dear Secretary Turner,

On behalf of the New England Council, the oldest regional business association in the nation representing hundreds of companies, institutions, and organizations across all six New England states, we express our strong opposition to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) proposed rule entitled *"Verification of Eligible Status,"* published on February 20, 2026.

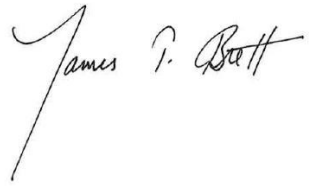
While we recognize the importance of program integrity and accountability, this proposal threatens to undermine ongoing efforts throughout New England to enhance housing accessibility, strengthen the workforce, and promote regional economic development. At a time when the region faces an acute housing shortage and persistent labor market challenges, the proposed regulation would impose substantial additional administrative burdens on housing providers, including the private-sector owners and managers of affordable housing, as well as public agencies. These new requirements would divert limited resources and staff capacity away from housing production, tenant services, and compliance with existing programs, potentially delaying the delivery of much-needed affordable housing.

Restricted access to safe and affordable housing would also have direct economic consequences for employers across New England, many of whom are already struggling with workforce shortages- particularly in healthcare, advanced manufacturing, construction, hospitality, and other critical sectors. Housing instability or worker displacement makes it more difficult for employers to recruit and retain employees, weakening regional competitiveness and undermining broader economic resilience.

Contrary to its stated intent to improve efficiency, the proposed rule is likely to shift costs rather than reduce them, increasing reliance on emergency housing, healthcare services, and other publicly funded support systems.

We respectfully request that the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development withdraw the proposed rule and instead work collaboratively with stakeholders to pursue policies that expand housing supply, reduce unnecessary administrative burdens, and foster stable communities and a competitive workforce.

Sincerely,



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