

## United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND  
URBAN AFFAIRS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6075

March 18, 2025

The Honorable Gene L. Dodaro  
Comptroller General of the United States  
U.S. Government Accountability Office  
441 G Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20548

Dear Comptroller General Dodaro:

We write to request that the Government Accountability Office (GAO) investigate recent actions undertaken at the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and by the administration's newly established Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) to reduce the resources available for the enforcement of fair housing laws.

It is illegal to discriminate in the sale or rental of housing, including against individuals seeking a mortgage or housing assistance, or in other housing-related activities. The Fair Housing Act prohibits this discrimination because of race, color, national origin, religion, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), familial status, and disability. A variety of other federal civil rights laws, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and the Americans with Disabilities Act, prohibit discrimination in housing and community development programs and activities, particularly those that are assisted with HUD funding. According to a report from the National Fair Housing Alliance, an estimated 34,000 fair housing complaints were made in 2023.<sup>1</sup>

HUD is required by various federal fair housing and civil rights laws to affirmatively further the purposes of the Fair Housing Act. More specifically, HUD's Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity (FHEO) is responsible for leading the nation in the enforcement, administration, development, and public understanding of fair housing laws and policies. Despite HUD's key role in enforcing the Fair Housing Act, however, the Trump Administration has taken steps to reduce the agency's ability to fulfill this key function. Specifically, the Administration reportedly plans to terminate nearly 80 percent of FHEO staff,<sup>2</sup> has terminated key Fair Housing Act enforcement grants,<sup>3</sup> and reversed or halted enforcement of key HUD rules, including the

---

<sup>1</sup>National Fair Housing Alliance, "2024 Fair Housing Trends Report," July 10, 2024, <https://nationalfairhousing.org/resource/2024-fair-housing-trends-report/>.

<sup>2</sup> Associated Press, "Trump administration looks to slash HUD workers tackling the housing crisis," Sally Ho and Jesse Bedayn, February 21, 2025, <https://apnews.com/article/doge-hud-trump-turner-affordable-housing-musk-0176c8539fa9b5959198c351c97b8652#>.

<sup>3</sup> Associated Press, "Trump administration to slash funding for enforcement of fair housing laws," Jesse Bedayn, February 28, 2025, <https://apnews.com/article/trump-doge-housing-crisis-cuts-discrimination->

Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing Rule and the Equal Access Rule.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, according to public reports, Housing Secretary Scott Turner allowed DOGE employees to access “some of the most critical and sensitive systems inside HUD,” potentially including reports of discrimination, personally identifiable information, and information about people who have experienced domestic violence.<sup>5</sup>

These efforts to undermine HUD come in the wake of recent GAO and HUD OIG reports that have identified staffing capacity—including at FHEO—as a key challenge in implementing the agency’s key functions. More specifically, within FHEO, the OIG released a report in 2024 identifying limited staffing and training and high staff workloads as key barriers to FHEO’s ability to complete investigations within 100 days for housing discrimination.<sup>6</sup>

Given the potential for substantial impacts of recent activities on FHEO’s ability to carry out its mission, we are requesting your assistance to investigate activities that have occurred since January 20, 2025, and report on the following:

1. A detailed review of DOGE actions that affect HUD’s leadership, management, and operations related to fair housing.
2. The impact of staffing cuts at HUD on FHEO and the investigation and enforcement of housing discrimination complaints.
3. The status of HUD’s Fair Housing Assistance Program and Fair Housing Initiatives Program, to include the impact of changes to HUD’s grant agreements with funded organizations.
4. The impact of DOGE actions on HUD’s efforts to implement the Violence Against Women Act.

Sincerely,

---

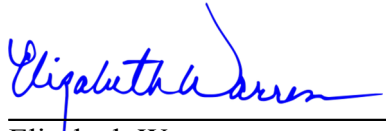
d0c6e3b4b030787a1f60a7dc153153dd.

<sup>4</sup> U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, “Secretary Scott Turner Cuts Red Tape by Terminating AFFH Rule,”

[https://www.hud.gov/press/press\\_releases\\_media\\_advisories/hud\\_no\\_25\\_034#:~:text=WASHINGTON%20%2D%20Today%2C%20Secretary%20Scott%20Turner,to%20local%20and%20state%20governments.](https://www.hud.gov/press/press_releases_media_advisories/hud_no_25_034#:~:text=WASHINGTON%20%2D%20Today%2C%20Secretary%20Scott%20Turner,to%20local%20and%20state%20governments.;); U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, “Secretary Scott Turner Halts Enforcement Actions of HUD’s Gender Identity Rule,” [https://www.hud.gov/press/press\\_releases\\_media\\_advisories/hud\\_no\\_25\\_026](https://www.hud.gov/press/press_releases_media_advisories/hud_no_25_026).

<sup>5</sup> Wired, “DOGE Staffers at HUD Are From an AI Real Estate Firm and a Mobile Home Operator,” Victoria Elliot and David Gilbert, February 26, 2025, <https://www.wired.com/story/doge-hud-systems-access-ai-prop-tech-real-estate-mobile-home/>.

<sup>6</sup> Office of Inspector General, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, *FHEO Faces Challenges in Completing Investigations Within 100 Days*, Audit Report Number: 2024-BO-005 (Washington, D.C.: Sept. 24, 2024).



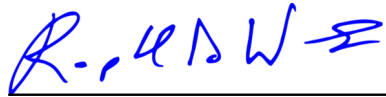
---

Elizabeth Warren  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Banking,  
Housing, and Urban Affairs




---

Tina Smith  
United States Senator



---

Raphael Warnock  
United States Senator



---

Cory A. Booker  
United States Senator



---

Alex Padilla  
United States Senator