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April 19, 2021

The Honorable Elizabeth Warren  
United States Senate  
309 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Warren:

On behalf of America's credit unions, I am writing today in support of the "American Housing and Economic Mobility Act of 2021." The Credit Union National Association (CUNA) represents America's state and federal credit unions and the more than 120 million members that they serve.

The American Housing and Economic Mobility Act of 2021 is an important effort to improve access to the housing market for members of all communities and, in the process, properly recognizes the distinctions that exist between credit unions and banks when meeting community needs. The legislation rejects a one-size-fits-all approach by explicitly excluding credit unions from the Community Reinvestment Act and instead codifying the already existing community outreach, input, and oversight policies that credit unions have been abiding by for more than 20 years under National Credit Union Administration regulations.

Though still a small percentage of the housing market overall, credit unions have come to play an increasingly larger role in meeting America's mortgage credit needs. Recent CUNA research shows the result of those efforts: more than half of all credit union mortgages made across the United States went to households earning middle incomes or less. Credit unions are not only committed to serving individuals of modest means, we recognize that it is our mission.

To that end, the legislation also includes provisions that would allow credit unions—mission-based, not-for-profit cooperatives—to more readily meet the needs of underserved communities. An article by Bloomberg News suggests these provisions are timely:

“For years the nation's largest banks have been shrinking their vast branch networks. They've been cutting back faster in relatively poor neighborhoods than in more affluent ones.”<sup>1</sup>

Credit unions prioritize people over profits and are committed to meeting each of our members' needs. We stand ready to meet the needs of those communities that banks, for whatever reasons, have found themselves unable to address.

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<sup>1</sup> Davis, M. (March 11, 2019). As U.S. banks shut branches, JPMorgan leads a shift toward wealthy areas. Bloomberg News, Retrieved from <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2019-03-06/as-u-s-banks-shut-branches-jpmorganleads-shift-toward-wealthy>.

On behalf of America's credit unions, I want to thank you and your staff for not only listening and acknowledging our concerns about earlier versions of this legislation that applied the Community Reinvestment Act to credit unions, but also working with us to develop an approach that better serves the interests of communities. Thank you for your leadership on these important issues. We look forward to working with you to advance this legislation.

Sincerely,



Jim Nussle  
President & CEO