

**MIKE SIMPSON**

SECOND DISTRICT, IDAHO

WASHINGTON OFFICE:  
2084 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515  
(202) 225-5531  
FAX: (202) 225-8216

DISTRICT OFFICE:  
802 WEST BANNOCK STREET, SUITE 600  
BOISE, ID 83702  
(208) 334-1953  
FAX: (208) 334-9533  
simpson.house.gov



COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

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EDUCATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

April 22, 2021

The Honorable Rosa L. DeLauro  
Chair  
House Appropriations Committee  
H-307, The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kay Granger  
Ranking Member  
House Appropriations Committee  
1036 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chair DeLauro and Ranking Member Granger:

I am requesting \$1,000,000 for Habitat's Communities of Hope – Step up to Home Ownership, Idaho Falls, Idaho, Bonneville, ID02 project in the FY22 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development Appropriations bill.

The project sponsor for this project is Habitat for Humanity Idaho Falls Area, Inc. and the project is located at 1954 N. Yellowstone Hwy, Idaho Falls, ID 83401.

The funding is designated to create a lasting stock of affordable homes for low- to moderate-income families, creating a path for home ownership no matter the family's current financial circumstances. A variety of housing types – tiny, attached, and single-family - will be available. Families will build equity in all levels of home ownership. Families will meet financial and community service requirements. Mortgage payments will never exceed 30% of monthly income. If necessary, residents can provide sweat equity for partial mortgage payments. The property will remain in a land trust or cooperative ownership. Residents will pay small homeowner fees and be voting members of the HO association. To help families be successful homeowners, residents will be provided supportive services. Seven service providers and a shopping center are within one mile of a property identified as a desirable location for Habitat's pilot Community of Hope project.

The project is an appropriate use of taxpayer dollars. Studies show that home ownership is the single best way to pull a family up out of poverty. Communities of Hope will help low- to middle-income families and individuals achieve the benefits of home ownership at an affordable price. According to Realtor.com, the median price of a home in Bonneville County was up 17% in 2019 and another 23% in 2020. Fewer families can qualify to purchase a home and rental units are at capacity. The average cost of renting a two-bedroom apartment in Idaho Falls is currently \$1,118 per month, up from \$625 in 2018. With housing costs increasing and wages remaining stagnant, low- and middle-income families are no longer able to afford housing of any kind in Idaho Falls. The increase in housing costs in Idaho Falls has caused the number of families requesting help from Habitat to more than double in the past year. Acquiring suitable land and the necessary funds for infrastructure is a critical first step in meeting the escalating affordable housing needs in Idaho Falls.

I certify that neither I nor my immediate family has any financial interest in this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike Simpson", with the initials "M.C." written in small letters at the bottom right of the signature.

Mike Simpson  
April 20, 2021