



Regulations Division
Office of the General Counsel
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
2415 Eisenhower Ave., Alexandria, VA 22314

RE: FR-6144-P-09 HOME INVESTMENT PARTNERSHIPS PROGRAM: FURTHER UPDATES AND STREAMLINING

Dear Assistant Secretary Kurtz,

The Georgia Apartment Association (GAA) is grateful for the opportunity to provide comments on the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) supplemental notice of proposed rulemaking, HOME Investment Partnerships Program: Further Program Updates and Streamlining.

GAA is the leading association of rental housing owners, managers and developers in Georgia, many of which participate in the Home Investment Partnership. On behalf of the 645,000 apartments that we represent across the state, that provide homes to more than 1.2 million people, our association appreciates HUD's commitment to streamlining the HOME program and improving its ability to deliver affordable housing opportunities to renters in Georgia.

Several of the provisions in the proposed rule would reduce the regulatory burdens on rental housing providers and incentivize participation. GAA is especially supportive of the removal of provisions that could conflict with state and local law, including those regarding security deposits, utility billing, and notice requirements. Additionally, HUD's updated proposal would better respect the rights and responsibilities contained within each lease agreement by eliminating problematic regulations on tenant associations and vague retaliation protections. Lastly, adjusting the corrective action and inspection scheduling requirements to be limited to life-threatening deficiencies is a critical improvement on the previous proposed rule.

Taken together, these changes represent much-needed reform to both the 2025 final rule and the HOME Program. GAA is concerned, however, about the "good cause" eviction language that this supplemental notice retains from the previous version. Georgia law already provides a comprehensive framework governing the landlord-tenant relationship and dispossession process. Under O.C.G.A. § 44-7-50, Georgia law establishes when a property owner may seek possession, the notice required before filing certain actions, the timeline for a tenant to respond, and the defenses and counterclaims a tenant may raise in court. The Georgia General Assembly has also recently updated this framework through the Safe at Home Act, which added

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new habitability, utility, security deposit, and nonpayment notice protections. However, Georgia has not adopted a statewide “good cause” or “just cause” eviction standard that limits lease termination or nonrenewal to a federally prescribed list of acceptable reasons.

HUD’s proposed “good cause” language would create a separate federal overlay on top of Georgia’s existing lease-based and court-supervised process, resulting in one standard for HOME-assisted units and another for otherwise comparable rental housing. This added complexity would make compliance more difficult for housing providers, tenants, courts, and local program administrators, particularly in mixed-income or layered-finance properties and could discourage participation in the HOME program.

All 50 states and the District of Columbia have established laws which govern the landlord-tenant relationship and regulate evictions, but, as of last year, eight states enumerate the reasons for a “good cause,” “just cause” or “no fault” eviction and only a handful of cities outside those states do so. States are best situated to tailor laws that meet the needs of the communities they serve. A one-size-fits-all federal standard would unnecessarily complicate compliance and increase the costs to provide rental housing. For these reasons, we ask HUD to remove the “good cause” eviction language from the final rule.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments and hear our unique perspectives. If our association can be of further assistance during this rulemaking process, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Julie M. Anderson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Julie M. Anderson, CAE, MBA
President & CEO
Georgia Apartment Association