



**WRITTEN STATEMENT OF THE RIGHT TO THE CITY ALLIANCE
SUBMITTED TO THE HOUSE FINANCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE
May 25, 2010**

The Right to the City Alliance (RTTC) is grateful for the opportunity to submit this statement in conjunction with today's hearing on the draft legislation proposed by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the *Preservation, Enhancement and Transformation of Rental Assistance Act of 2010* (PETRA). RTTC has serious concerns about many of the provisions contained in PETRA. We believe that, if passed, this legislation will threaten the availability and accessibility of permanently affordable housing stock for low-income people in this country. We also believe that PETRA fails to address the severe need for affordable housing and will mirror housing policies, such as HOPE VI, that have negatively impacted low-income, working people and have dismantled communities across the country.

RTTC is a grassroots coalition that emerged in 2007 as a unified response to gentrification, calling for a halt to displacement of low-income people (disproportionately people of color, LGBTQ, and youth of color) from their historic neighborhoods. Last week, RTTC released a groundbreaking report, *We Call These Projects Home: Solving the Housing Crisis from the Ground Up*, which documents the crisis created by decades of public housing policies that prioritize privatization and the deconcentration of poverty over investment in low-income communities. Through our comprehensive research involving hundreds of public housing residents from around the country, we found that public housing is one of the only options available to low-income people for secure, stable, and permanently affordable housing, and that government policies should be guided by preserving, strengthening, and expanding the existing public housing system. The report can be found at: www.righttothecity.org.

Based on the findings in our report, and our experience as grassroots groups working with public housing residents in New York, New Orleans, Miami, D.C., San Francisco, Oakland, and Los Angeles, we have three specific concerns with PETRA.

First, we are concerned about PETRA's proposal to privatize public housing. HUD has justified this direction by claiming that leveraging private financing is the only way to fund the \$20 billion needed to maintain and repair the existing public housing stock. But there are ways to infuse public investment to meet this need. Specifically, Congress can