

**Transcript: Congressman Scott and HUD Secretary Fudge**  
*HUD Secretary Testifies on COVID-19 and Housing Security, C-SPAN*  
5 minutes 33 seconds  
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**Chairlady Maxine Waters:** Thank you. The gentleman from Georgia, Mr. Scott, who is also the Chair of the House Agriculture Committee is now recognized for five minutes.

**Congressman David Scott:** Thank you Chairlady, I appreciate that. Secretary Fudge, I am so proud of you. You and I have served together in the House for many years, and you are doing a wonderful job.

Now, I want to pick this up in a way and deal with two issues. I want to get to the rental one because that has raised some issues as well, but I think it's very important because we have the nation watching this.

And, while I'm on that, Chairlady Waters, you are absolutely right. It was very important. This was her first chance to come before this Committee, and she deserves to have this opportunity on her own, and I respect you and thank you for doing that.

Now, I want to set the record straight. First of all, the White House initial infrastructure proposal included a \$213 billion dollar investment to create and retrofit over 2 million affordable housing units that were badly and still badly needed.

But, in the bipartisan infrastructure agreement, that provision did not make the cut. So, here we are, working our way through the infrastructure situation and I think it is fair for us to hear from you.

What do you see? What do you want? It is your job to deal with this. Tell us what we must do, how much money we need to make sure is here, to get the job done.

**Secretary Fudge:** Thank you very, very much.

Just a couple of things to frame this for you. There is no place in America today where a person making minimum wage can afford a two-bedroom apartment. Nowhere. Not just California-- nowhere. And so, we know that we need affordable housing.

And so, Mr. Scott, I would say to you that we are anticipating and very hopeful that in the reconciliation in the Build Back Better Plan, the resources will be there to build at least 2 million. We need far more. We need *far* more.

There are 11 million people in this country today that are spending more than half of their money on rent. It cannot continue. It cannot support itself.

And so, we know that we need more, but we are hopeful that we will at least get the resources to match what the President is asking us for in the Build Back Better Plan.

**Congressman David Scott:** Thank you. And now, let's go to this rental issue because we worked hard. We did get nearly \$47 billion dollars there.

But I want you to, and I think the nation needs to know, that you can execute the program, but much of these funds go down to the various states to implement. How has that been handled and do you see difficulties in the states fulfilling their obligation?

Because in so much of this, I've been involved in this for quite a while. You were with us when we go all the way to the Hardest Hit Program when we sent billions of dollars down to our states and territories so that we could help homeowners stay in their homes.

We're doing the same thing with the renters. We even have moratoriums going on. But, tell us how this works, and also tell us, does this money go to the renter? Does it go to the landlord? How does it work?

**Secretary Fudge:** Well, let me start--

**Congressman David Scott:** America may need to know.

**Secretary Fudge:** I'm sorry. Let me start at the backend. The money goes to the landlords, so the landlords can be made whole so that we can get people up to speed and current with their rent.

But most importantly, part of the problem has been that when we sent the money to the states, and to anything other than a CDBG or formula city or community, the money was held up because they didn't have the assistance or the capacity to get it out fast enough.

So, what we have been doing--personally, I have been calling mayors and governors, and others, to say, "We got to get money through the system."

So, what we are seeing today is that the number of resources that are getting out is increasing exponentially every month.

**Congressman David Scott:** Thank you.