

**From:** [Christine Márquez-Hudson](#)  
**To:** [dencc - City Council](#)  
**Subject:** Letter to City Council from The Denver Foundation  
**Date:** Monday, September 19, 2016 12:05:02 PM

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Dear Denver City Council,

On behalf of The Denver Foundation, I am writing this letter to express support for Bill 16-0625. The Denver Foundation commends the Council for its commitment to supporting affordable housing and seeking a permanent funding solution.

The Denver Foundation is the oldest and largest community foundation in Colorado. With a focus on Metro Denver, our community programs support economic opportunity, basic human needs, education and community leadership. In our work, we see the devastating effects the rapid increase in housing costs has had on families in Denver. This phenomena is increasing homelessness, negatively impacting children and their educations, and making it difficult for businesses to secure consistent employees. Families are being forced to flee Denver. To ensure the diverse, vibrant and stable community we all desire, we are committed to efforts to address the affordable housing shortage. Indeed, most other major cities across the country have an affordable housing revenue stream to ensure that strong economic development doesn't mean that working families are forced to leave town.

Bill 16-0625 puts affordable housing first—and our community desperately needs a commitment to this investment now. This bill also guarantees that there will be two dedicated sources for affordable housing, whereas the alternate bill does not. While we understand the desire of supporters of the alternate bill to seek other, larger funding sources for affordable housing, the bill does not create or obligate any actual funding. In fact, the only thing guaranteed in the alternate bill is that the two funding sources would go into effect with the delay of a year. We cannot afford to wait. Bill 16-0625 is the result of a year and a half of hard work, a vigorous vetting process and extensive community feedback whereas 0626 was given just one day for public review before its first reading. Moreover, the research on additional or alternative funding that 0626 seeks can be undertaken after passage of 0625. Implementing these revenue streams does not preclude the development of other revenue streams at a later time. Finally, because of next year's reassessment, the City may not be able to increase the property tax rate in 2018 under a growth cap for tax collections that was part of TABOR. Thus, waiting could jeopardize this funding or require Council to cut into other programs to pay for it.

Given the urgency of the need for affordable housing—and even this funding is not adequate to meet that need—we urge the Council to act now.

Thank you for your consideration.

Christine Márquez-Hudson  
President & CEO  
The Denver Foundation  
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**From:** [Christine Koleski](#)  
**To:** [dence - City Council](#)  
**Subject:** Habitat for Humanity Letters in Support of 0625 for distribution to City Council  
**Date:** Monday, September 19, 2016 11:31:58 AM  
**Attachments:** [Submission to City Council in support of bill 625 for affordable housing fund 9.19.16.pdf](#)

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Dear City Council Members,

Habitat for Humanity of Metro Denver respectfully submits the attached letters for your consideration in support of bill 0625 to create a permanent, designated fund for affordable housing in Denver. These letters represent Habitat homeowners, board members, and staff members who are unable to attend tonight's City Council meeting due to work schedules and other conflicts but wished to share why they believe this fund is urgently needed to address the city's affordable housing crisis. Please contact Christine Koleski at [Christine@habitatmetrodenver.org](mailto:Christine@habitatmetrodenver.org) or 720-496-2715 if you have any questions or would like additional information about Habitat's support for 0625.

In partnership,

Christine Koleski  
Executive Assistant  
Habitat for Humanity of Metro Denver  
3245 Eliot St  
Denver, CO 80211-3287  
Phone: (720) 496-2715  
Email: [christine@habitatmetrodenver.org](mailto:christine@habitatmetrodenver.org)

To Whom It May Concern:

I am a proud Habitat for Humanity Homeowner. I am grateful for the dedication and commitment that HFH has to the communities they serve. I support Bill 625. There are so many families that are in need of affordable housing. I was one of those families. I needed a helping hand up and I was given just that from HFH. They walked alongside me and supported me as I ventured into homeownership. This was a dream come true for my family and me. I have been in my home for almost 6 years now. My daughter graduated from high school and I believe that because of the opportunity that was given to us, she is now encouraged to go to college for nursing and is making plans to be a homeowner in the future. We once had limited mindsets but the opportunity given to us has encouraged us to embrace all that our hearts desire. If we could accomplish the requirements to become homeowners then we can reach for the stars and pursue other dreams also. I truly believe in paying it forward that is why I am taking the time to express the importance of Bill 625 passing. I know there are more families in Denver that are in the same boat we were once in and they are in need of the opportunity that we were given so that they too can embrace their dreams and push through to a better future.

With a sincere and grateful heart.

Juana R Fernandez  
Proud HFH Homeowner

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Dear City Council Members,

Before I introduce myself, I want to thank you for your service to our city. I serve on the management team of Denver Investments (formerly, Denver Investment Advisors), an institutional money management firm that has had a presence here in Denver for over 60 years.

I am writing to encourage you to vote to approve Bill 625 to establish a permanent fund for affordable housing in Denver. As a board member of Habitat for Humanity of Metro Denver, I can attest to the transformational affects affordable home ownership has on families in our community. In addition, while serving on the board of Children's Hospital Colorado Foundation, I have learned what value having an affordable, stable and healthy home brings to the overall health and well-being of the children in our community. Setting our children up for success today will contribute to Denver's long term prosperity.

Voting in favor of Bill 625 will help establish this legacy for our children and ultimately, our city. Thank you in advance for your support!

Regards,

John Fenley

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Mr. New,

I am the CEO of SM Energy, a publicly traded oil and gas company headquartered in Denver, and a resident of your Council district. I just wanted to encourage you to vote to approve Bill 625 to establish a permanent fund for affordable housing in Denver. I am a board member of a local charity dealing with child abuse and neglect in Denver, and I have seen the tremendous positive impact having a stable home life in an affordable home can have for children in our community. I understand that this bill and its funding mechanism was constructed with a significant amount of public input and I hope you will “strike while the iron is hot” and get this important initiative approved now.

Thank you for your efforts on behalf of Denver’s children.

Jay Ottoson  
President and CEO  
SM Energy

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9/14/16

Dear Council Members:

My name is Heather Hamilton. I am a current partner family with Habitat for Humanity. I am unable to be there this evening due to my work schedule, but wanted to show my support of Bill 625.

I just moved into my home in December, 2015. Habitat for Humanity and their affordable home program made my dream of homeownership come true. I, now, can provide a safe, stable, affordable home for myself and my three children. We live in a community of Habitat homes and homeowners. It is special as I can see what a difference these homes have made in the lives of the families that live there. We are sharing a community, can lay down roots for our families and reap the benefits that affordable housing has provided us. In my case, I can now save money for my children’s college expenses and for retirement. We have more of a cushion each month in our budget and can pay down debt as well. The stress of ever increasing rent has diminished. Please consider these points when making your decision tonight:

- Bill 625 creates a permanent fund with designated revenue sources that will provide \$150 million over the next 10 years for affordable housing. This fund will ensure a better Denver for families today, and for generations to come.
- This bill was crafted through a year-long community stakeholder process informed by input from housing advocates, nonprofit and for-profit developers including Habitat for Humanity, homeless service providers, community representatives, business and industry groups, and Denver residents.
- We can’t wait another year to act when so many people in our city simply can’t get by and are forced to make tradeoffs to cover their rent, like working a second or third job and cutting back on healthcare and healthy food. Passing the bill now will make a difference in people’s lives through projects already in the pipeline.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Heather Hamilton  
4201 Fraser Way #102  
Denver, CO 80239  
Hamilton25413@peoplepc.com

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Hello my name is Elvia a Habitat homeowner for now 4 years. My story starts as a single mother of one child always working hard to keep my child and me a roof over our heads always renting living with roommates and moving to different places in order to afford pricing. Even though I managed to survive we lived pay check to pay check never having extra money for much sometimes struggling to buy groceries. When I heard about Habitat I was excited to hear that I could own my own home and how affordable it was. Everyone I met was amazing always willing to help and the entire organization made the entire process easy. 8 months into the program I owned my own home. Since then I have to say that I no longer feel like I'm struggling. Me and my child have a secure and safe home to live. I will have paid off my home by the time I'm 50 and I'm grateful I'll have a place to call home forever and also grateful that my child will have a home long after I'm gone. I cannot express how grateful I am with Habitat. I encourage anyone whom can volunteer or help Habitat because I'm aware that they can and will do everything they can to help those hard working people whom need housing. Habitat is a great organization that I would be proud to recommend to anyone.

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**PLEASE LISTEN TO THIS CRY FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING!**

As a Denver Native and the oldest daughter of 5 children, my father who owned his own business could never have afforded housing for our family at the extremely high prices the City of Denver and the State of Colorado have found themselves in due to rapid growth. My Dad and Mom chose a home that was in a solid community, did we all have our own bedrooms...NO, but I wouldn't have had it any other way three girls shared one room and it was good memories...PLEASE HELP OTHER LESS FORTUNATE PEOPLE BE ABLE TO CREATE MEMORIES FOR THEIR CHILDREN.

I am also a divorced mother of two children, I was fortunate to have a home that my children and I were able to live in. My blessed experience has always left me wondering "WHAT IF? WHAT WOULD I HAVE DONE?" We were in a safe area, good schools, little crime the gift of all these blessings is, two children that are self-sufficient, married with children of their own living in housing they can afford. **AFFORDABLE HOUSING IS A GIFT!**

Cherri Peterson  
Corporate Donations Manager  
Habitat Metro Denver