



NATIONAL SHERIFFS' ASSOCIATION

March 2, 2026

The Honorable Tim Scott
Chairman
U.S. Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Elizabeth Warren
Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20510

Re: Include the HELPER Act in the Senate Housing Package

Dear Chairman Scott and Ranking Member Warren:

On behalf of the National Sheriffs' Association (NSA), representing 3,081 sheriffs and over 20,000 public safety professionals - we write to support inclusion of S.978, the Homes for Every Local Protector, Educator, and Responder (HELPER) Act, in the Senate housing legislation currently under negotiation. The HELPER Act has garnered strong bipartisan support, with 22 sponsors and cosponsors in the Senate and 118 in the House of Representatives.

The HELPER Act proposes a focused and fiscally responsible approach by creating a sustainable mortgage program for public servants. Notably, the program is structured to function without imposing additional costs on taxpayers. First responders consistently show steadfast commitment to the communities they serve, and expanding access to affordable homeownership is a tangible and impactful way to support them and their families.

Housing affordability has become one of the most urgent issues confronting law enforcement agencies nationwide. In many communities first responders, including 9-1-1 dispatchers, can no longer afford to live in the areas they serve. This growing gap is fueling serious recruitment and retention challenges for departments across the country, ultimately undermining public safety and the stability of the communities they are committed to protecting. We respectfully ask you as leaders of this Committee to champion an amendment to include our Dispatchers who "answer 9-1-1, emergency, or non-emergency calls or dispatch first responders or other resources to emergencies or incidents" within the definition of "First Responder" within the HELPER Act.

The HELPER Act offers a bipartisan, implementation-ready proposal that advances those objectives and warrants inclusion in the final legislative package. We request you to support incorporating the HELPER Act into the underlying housing legislation. Thank you for your leadership and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris West".

Sheriff Chris West
Canadian County, OK
President
National Sheriffs' Association

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Justin Smith".

Justin Smith
Executive Director, CEO
National Sheriffs' Association