

OFFICE OF THE HONORABLE MAYOR

SHENG THAO
CITY OF OAKLAND



CITY HALL • ONE CITY HALL PLAZA • OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA 94612

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Oakland Mayor Sheng Thao Advocates for Increased Federal Housing Vouchers in Washington, DC

Washington DC - April 30, 2024 - This week, Oakland Mayor Sheng Thao joined the United States Conference of Mayors in Washington, DC to advocate for increased Housing and Urban Development (HUD) housing vouchers for the City of Oakland. Mayor Thao, alongside a contingent of mayors, focused on addressing the pressing issues of housing and homelessness affecting communities nationwide.

The trip commenced on Monday, April 29, with a series of strategic meetings to garner support for Oakland's housing initiatives. Mayor Thao, alongside her fellow mayors, engaged in productive discussions with key figures, including Acting HUD Secretary Adrienne Todman and Secretary Xavier Becerra, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and Chair of the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness. These discussions underscored the importance of collaboration between all levels of government to address housing affordability and homelessness.

Mayor Thao's advocacy for federal resources to address housing and homelessness included meetings at the White House with Tom Perez, Senior Advisor to President Biden, and Director of the White House Office of Intergovernmental Affairs; Jeff Zients, White House Chief of Staff; Neera Tanden, Domestic Policy Advisor to President Biden; Secretary Denis McDonough of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Shalanda Young, Director of the Office of Management and Budget; and Deputy Secretary Wally Adeyemo of the U.S. Department of the Treasury.

Mayor Thao held discussions with members of the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate including Representative Mark Takano, House Veterans' Affairs Committee Ranking Member, and Representative Pete Aguilar, House Democratic Caucus Chair. Additionally, Mayor Thao met with Senator Sherrod Brown, Chair of the Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, and Representative Maxine Waters, Chair of the House Financial Services Committee.

Mayor Thao expressed her determination and commitment, stating: *"The housing crisis in Oakland and across the country demands urgent action. We cannot stand idly by while our communities suffer. I am honored to represent Oakland in Washington, DC advocating for increased HUD housing vouchers and collaborating with federal partners to address homelessness and housing instability. Together, we can make a meaningful difference in the lives of our most vulnerable residents."*

HUD housing vouchers, administered by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), are a crucial tool in addressing housing affordability for low-income individuals and families. These vouchers, also known as Section 8 vouchers, provide rental assistance to eligible households, allowing them to afford housing in the private market. Recipients typically pay a portion of their income towards rent, while the voucher covers the remainder, up to a certain limit determined by HUD. This program aims to ensure that low-income individuals and families have access to safe and affordable housing options, helping to alleviate homelessness and housing instability across the country. Mayor Thao's advocacy for increased HUD housing vouchers reflects the pressing need to expand access to affordable housing in Oakland and beyond, highlighting the importance of federal support in addressing the ongoing housing crisis.

Since being sworn in as the 51st Mayor of Oakland last year, Mayor Thao has led on some of the most innovative and progressive housing and homeless policies, including investing over \$200 million into affordable housing, securing over \$110 million in additional support through state and federal grants, streamlining permitting for affordable housing, and legalizing affordable housing throughout the City of Oakland.