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On Trump Administration Plan to Address Affordable Housing, Tester asks Treasury Secretary: ‘How much input did you get from rural America?’

Senator: “We’ve got just as big a crisis in rural America, if not worse, and nobody is paying attention to it”

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U.S. Senator Jon Tester today grilled U.S. Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin during a Senate Banking Committee hearing over the Trump Administration’s plan to address the ongoing affordable housing crisis and whether it would provide relief for communities in Montana and across rural America:

“I don’t want to talk about housing in San Francisco or LA or Denver or New York City or Atlanta or Miami or Houston. I want to talk about housing in Miles City and Plentywood and Great Falls and Billings and Missoula; in Pablo, in Rocky Boy,” Tester told Mnuchin. “Because quite frankly, we’re talking about large cities, and we’ve got just as big a crisis in rural America, if not worse, and nobody is paying attention to it. So I want to start with you, Secretary Mnuchin, when this plan was developed, how much effort was put in to getting information from rural and frontier America on affordable housing?”

Mnuchin responded that the Administration received input from a variety of sources, before promising, “This should very much help the people in Montana, not just the people in New York and California.”

Tester, Montana’s only member of the Banking Committee, also demanded answers from Mnuchin on the Administration’s proposed changes to the 30-year fixed rate mortgage, and received assurances that the Administration would not move to remove government backing from those loans.

Tester is a strong advocate for expanding affordable housing opportunities in Montana. Through his role on the Senate Appropriations Committee, he played a key role in negotiating a bipartisan budget deal that made substantial investments into affordable housing initiatives including the HOME and CDBG programs. Earlier this year he helped secure more than \$4 million for Public Housing Authorities across Montana and more than \$26 million for affordable housing in Indian Country.

Read more about Tester's efforts to expand affordable housing in Montana [HERE](#).

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