As a senior citizen I find myself with less than enough income from Social Security to pay for clean housing that is appropriate for my family. I live in one of the poorest counties in the U.S., Cameron County, Texas. Still a small 2–3-bedroom home here rents for between $1500 and $2000 a month. Section 8 housing, because of the lack of jobs and south of the border immigration, has a 2-year backlog and does not offer anything other than apartment style living. With only $800 per month Social Security, I only have enough, even with the small subsidy of SNAP Benefit of $70, per month, to pay for gasoline, utilities, phone, and insurance. This leaves me near nothing for housing and my actual food cost of well in excess of $250 per month.

I fully appreciate and understand the property owner’s perspective and protecting their ownership rights having been previously a property owner and landlord myself. However, there is a true lack of available affordable housing in our area and within our country. If we do not adequately provide for our elderly and those in our society, through no fault of their own are living well below the “poverty” line, what does it say about American culture? That said, nationally we need federal and state subsidies to be able to provide appropriate shelter for both families and seniors.

My thoughts are as follows; if a person or family has little to no income and can prove, through their job application process, that they have invested in employment and been unsuccessful, further, are living with income below the established “National Poverty Level”, that our federal and state governments have an obligation to help this section of our population with clean affordable housing and/or offer a realistic monthly stiffen to subsidize their housing expenses. I can understand if a property owner has a mortgage, property tax, and casualty insurance cost of a particular amount, they need to cover “all” their property ownership expenses. When and if that is not possible then a subsidy is an appropriate way to keep property owners whole and allow for tenants to reside and have housing in an appropriate property.

During COVID19 there was in place governmental assistance for housing that provided this type and style of assisting in renters housing expenses. However, currently that has mostly ended and dried up and in our area of Texas, there is no funding for assistance currently available through government or private funding.

I am sure this is a “national” issue and problem and there is a critical need to provide housing for both our seniors, war veterans, and young families. I realize there must be a “balance” to financial assistance and what funds are and can be available. But this needs to be a governmental priority and imperative. We spend billions each year in assisting foreign governments and people and are not 1st providing for our own citizens. On the national level and through our Federal Government we need re-prioritize what we as a nation are spending our tax dollars on. Again, I state; what does it say about our society and culture if we allow the herein above groups of our citizens to go homeless while sending hundreds of billions of dollars off our shores to foreign governments and regimes?

Yes, financial balance has to be a “factor” in providing rental subsidies or monthly stiffens but this is an area that must be given “priority” in our governmental spending. As a senior of nearly 71 years, former business owner, tax payer, and supporter of our country and its democracy, we have a problem in “our” America that needs our attention and assistance. We must 1st provide shelter and food to our most needy and deserving citizens, with priority given to seniors. When we live in a culture that is the wealthiest in the world, where we have hundreds upon hundreds of billionaires, why are we unable to provide basic living conditions for many of our seniors, veterans, and young families? My explanation is; either as a country we don’t care or, we have not given these issues the adequate attention needed or priority they deserve. Let us not as a nation let this part of our population suffer and say to the world, “we are unwilling to provide for them”. Make this a federal mandate and priority moving forward, not to let the citizens that have supported for all their lives this country by their service and/or their hard earned tax dollars be left behind and homeless. Focus your attention acutely on a solution and act expeditiously. There is a critical need currently and swift and direct action is an imperative.

Thank you for your time to review and read my perspective on this issue.

Best Regards,

Frank Christopher