Expanding Service Coordinators Act
Rep. Adam Smith (WA-09)

Endorsed by: American Association of Service Coordinators, LeadingAge, Council of Large Public Housing Authorities, King County Housing Authority, Seattle Housing Authority, Tacoma Housing Authority, Public Housing Authority Directors Association, B’nai B’rith, Compass Housing Alliance, CSI Support & Development, Life Steps, Local Initiatives Support Coalition, New England Resident Service Coordinators Inc., Wesley Housing Corp., Massachusetts Association of Resident Service Coordinators in Housing, HumanGood, Sage Advocacy and Services for LGBTQ+ Elders, United Church Homes, Volunteers of America National Services, MJ Housing Services, National Church Residences, National Centers for Assisted Living, New Hampshire Association of Professional Service Coordinators, Embrace Living Communities, WinnCompanies, National Affordable Housing Managers Association, USAging

Background: Housing service coordinators are staff embedded in multifamily housing and public housing that provide a wide range of services including case management; the arrangement of transportation and appointments for health and personal care services; the facilitation of health and wellness programming; and the continuous assessment of resident needs. Service coordinators help promote housing stability among a population that often faces housing insecurity and helps seniors and residents with high needs avoid institutionalized care.

Unfortunately, service coordinator programs are underfunded and underutilized. The two primary programs that fund service coordinators for residents of federally assisted housing are the Multifamily Housing Service Coordinator Program and the Resident Opportunity and Self-Sufficiency Service Coordinator Program.

The Multifamily Housing Service Coordinator Program embeds staff in federally assisted housing to coordinate a wide field of services for older adults and people with disabilities like meal services, medication management, and transportation to appointments. Service coordinators create critical networks for residents to receive social services that can help them age in place.

The Resident Opportunity and Self-Sufficiency program utilizes service coordinators to help families by arranging for meals, transportation, housekeeping, health and nutrition programs, case management, job training, and assistance with personal care. This program helps families in public housing navigate social services to access better job and educational opportunities.

The Expanding Service Coordinators Act would make critical investments and reforms to expand the service coordinator programs to serve more people in federally assisted housing. Specifically, the bill would:

- Authorize an additional $100 million each year for five years to the Multi-Family Housing Service Coordinator program.
- Authorize a total $45 million each year for five years for the Resident Opportunity and Self-Sufficiency service coordinator program.
- Authorize a new $37 million grant program through the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) to award 150 grants to eligible properties to fund service coordinators.
- Establish a training set aside to improve capacity and retention of service coordinators.
- Extend qualification for the Public Service Loan Forgiveness program to service coordinators.
- Direct GAO to report on the availability and work of service coordinators in rural areas.
Service coordinators are an underfunded resource in federally assisted housing. They help individuals navigate the complicated web of social services that can make the difference between a resident sinking or thriving. It is more important now than ever to invest in this critical workforce.