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Home is where the heart is. In fact, Home is where it all starts.

Nonprofit Home Matters® works to promote the importance of having safe and affordable homes while reaffirming the home's impact on all facets of American life.

February 9, 2015 – During the month of February, we turn our attention to matters of the heart, showering those we love and cherish with hearts, cards and flowers. This February, Home Matters®, a coalition of corporations, government agencies and nonprofits, hopes we will also turn our attention to Home, and realize the impact Home has on every facet of American life. Home is not just where the heart is; Home is at the heart of core societal issues such as health, education, individual success and the economy. As it becomes more difficult for Americans at all income levels to find safe, affordable housing in nurturing communities, our individual and national wellbeing are at risk.

Together, many studies conducted by housing nonprofits, academics and government entities show that Home is pivotal to our personal wellbeing and success. For example, when it comes to academic performance, children in stable homes learn and achieve more in school. The quality of a child's neighborhood matters almost as much as the quality of the child's school. In terms of health, those who live in affordable, quality homes have better physical and mental health in the long term. They are less likely to get diseases like diabetes or suffer from depression. The quality of Home and community

also impacts our personal safety. For example, 25% fewer acts of domestic violence occur when public housing is clean and surrounded by natural landscapes. Overall, having an affordable home leads to greater success in both school and work. In addition, increasing affordable housing and the quality of communities is critical to a stronger economy. Having access to affordable homes allows people at all income levels to have more to spend and contribute to the economy.

While Home is our nation's common denominator, there is a housing crisis in America. More than half a million people in the U.S. do not have a home -- a quarter of whom are children -- and 52% of Americans have to make a sacrifice to pay their rent or mortgage. Major U.S. cities such as San Francisco, Los Angeles, Boston, Washington, D.C. and New York are experiencing extreme homelessness and affordable housing issues that are driving populations out of metro areas and negatively affecting the ecosystem of cities and communities. Years after the recession hit, many people are still fighting to stay above water -they are having to start again after foreclosure or are unable to afford a home of their own, as is the case with the millennial generation. In addition, federal, state and local funding is stagnant or diminishing. There is simply not enough public sector funding to confront and solve the current housing issues

It is for these reasons that the Home Matters[®] movement was launched in 2013 by a group of visionary housing professional and leaders. Working together with nonprofits, corporations and government entities, Home Matters[®] is working to build awareness of the need for more affordable housing and better communities across the country, and to raise funding make Home a reality for all Americans. As stated on the Home Matters[®]

website, “We need to redefine Home. We need to change the way people think about where they live. Home is not just about the four walls around us, it’s about the environment that affects the choices we make in life and who we become. With a new understanding of Home and its benefits, we can improve the stability of housing across the nation.”

Home Matters® is calling on all Americans to join in the conversation about the need to redefine the traditional American Dream to reflect a broader perspective about what we need from Home, and to build awareness of the need for affordable housing and how that impacts our personal and national success. To join the Home Matters® movement, visit www.HomeMattersAmerica.com. You can also make a donation on the website, with funding going to help local nonprofit organizations working on these issues across the country. Home Matters® also encourages Americans to volunteer with their local Home Matters® housing nonprofit, and to join the Home Matters® Facebook and Twitter pages.

About Home Matters®

The Home Matters® movement was launched in 2013 by a group of visionary housing professionals and leaders that identified a gap in public discourse. Fundamental social challenges in our nation – from health to education, to public safety, the economy and individual success – all have a common denominator: their connection to Home. With a high-level, holistic approach to housing, Home Matters® underlines the link between Home and these core societal issues such as health, education, safety, individual success and the economy. The Home Matters® mission is to build awareness and raise funds for

*more affordable homes and better communities across the nation. Home Matters[®]
partners with a coalition of over 250 organizations, including corporations, government
agencies and nonprofits. Visit Home Matters[®] at <http://www.homemattersamerica.com>.*

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