

housingactionillinois

March 1, 2011

United States Senator Richard Durbin
711 Hart Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Durbin:

As the Senate negotiates an agreement with the House on funding for the remainder of fiscal year 2011, we, the 49 undersigned organizations call for Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) programs to be funded at FY10 levels at a minimum, and 3 HUD programs must be funded at higher than FY10 levels to prevent households from being evicted from affordable housing:

- The tenant-based Housing Choice Voucher program requires more than \$900 million over FY10 levels for renewals.
- The project-based rental assistance program requires more than \$655 million over FY10 levels for renewals.
- The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Grants requires more than \$190 million over FY10 levels.

If the cuts proposed by the House in H.R. 1 go forward they will:

- Eliminate HUD funding for Housing Counseling to assist families facing foreclosure.
- Cut the Community Development Fund from \$4.45 billion to \$1.5 billion. The vast majority of this spending goes to Community Development Block Grants (CDBG).
- Cut Community Service Block Grants, which funds Community Action Agencies, by 46%.
- Cut the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program by 66%.

The federal government does have to get the budget deficit under control and eventually reduce it, but there are ways to do without harming the people with the fewest resources, such as letting tax cuts for the wealthiest Americans expire after 2012 and/or restructuring the mortgage interest deduction as credit targeted at low and moderate-income households.

In 2008, nearly 400,000 people in Illinois lived in HUD assisted units. The average household income was \$12,500 and 77% of these households have incomes at or below 30% of their area median income. Among the assisted households, wages are the main source of income for 26% of households. Only 4% have the majority of their income

come from TANF or other welfare assistance. The great majority, 64%, of households rely on other sources of income, such as retirement or disability income.

If you would like to discuss the issues raised in this letter, please contact Bob Palmer, Policy Director for Housing Action Illinois at 312-939-6074 x. 206 or bob@housingactionil.org.

Sincerely,

Lisa Tapper Pugliese, Executive Director, Affordable Housing Corporation of Lake County

John Peller, Director of Government Relations, AIDS Foundation of Chicago

Jennifer Hill, Executive Director, Alliance to End Homelessness in Suburban Cook County

Jing Zhang, Program Director, Community Health, Asian Human Services, Chicago

Paul D. White, CEO, C.E.F.S. Economic Opportunity Corporation, Effingham

Carmen Valentin, Building Manager, CALOR Casa Contreras, a Division of Anixter Center, Chicago

Nicole Amling, Director of Public Policy, Chicago Alliance to End Homelessness

Julie Dworkin, Director of Policy, Chicago Coalition for the Homeless

Gabriela Zapata, Advocacy Co-Chair, Chicago House and Social Service Agency

Leah Lvinger, Coordinator, Chicago Housing Initiative

Betty Ester, President, Citizens' Lighthouse Community Land Trust, Evanston

Susan M. Wohl, Executive Director, Community Contacts, Inc., Elgin

Danielle Taylor, Housing Counselor, Community Investment Corporation of Decatur, Inc.

Liseth Manzo, Manager, Consumer Credit Counseling Services, Aurora

Bette J. Reed, Vice President, Cornerstone Services, Inc., Joliet

Donna Moulton, Executive Director, DeKalb County Community Service Department

Lisa Tolbert, Executive Director, Delta Center, Inc., Cairo

Lynette Briggs, Acting Executive Director, DuPage Homeownership Center, Wheaton

Kathy Kregor, Co-Chair, DuPage Housing Action Coalition

Bobbi Burgstone, Executive Director, Habitat for Humanity of Illinois

Doug Schenkelberg, Associate Director of Policy & Advocacy, Heartland Alliance for Human Needs & Human Rights

Herb Fisher, Herbert H. Fisher Law Office, P.C., Chicago

Lucille Morgan-Williams, President, Hermitage Manor Cooperative, Chicago

Ryan J. Dowd, Executive Director, Hesed House, Aurora

Sister Sharon O'Grady, Housing Coordinator, House of Good Shepherd

Bob Palmer, Policy Director, Housing Action Illinois

Marlene Vellinga, Hyde Park Transitional Housing Project, Chicago

Katie Reeves, Program Assistant, Illinois Assistive Technology Program, Homeownership Coalition for People with Disabilities

Dr. Dalitso S. Sulamoyo, President & CEO, Illinois Association of Community Action Agencies

Pedro Enriquez, Case Manager, Illinois Migrant Council

Ken Oliver, Interfaith Open Communities, Chicago

Dennis P. Wiggins, Executive Director, Joseph Corporation, Aurora

Kathy Clark, Executive Director, Lawyers' Committee for Better Housing, Chicago

Nancy Marcus, President, League of Women Voters Illinois

John McDermott, Housing & Land Use Director, Logan Square Neighborhood Association, Chicago

Cheryll Boswell, Executive Director, METEC, Peoria

Dean Morris, Executive Director, Nobel Neighbors, Chicago

Perry Maier, Assistant Director, Open Door Clinic, Elgin

Kristen Komara, Director of Financial Services, The Resurrection Project, Chicago

Bob Campbell, Executive Director, Rockford Area Affordable Housing Coalition

Elizabeth Vitell, Executive Director, Rogers Park Community Council, Chicago

Heather Whiteford, Director, Rogers Park Community Development Corporation, Chicago

Rosie Hicks-Patton, Executive Assistant, Sankofa House, Chicago

Cathy Johnson, Director of Housing, Shelter Care Ministries, Rockford

Ofelia Navarro, Executive Director, Spanish Coalition for Housing, Chicago

Lore Baker, Executive Director, Supportive Housing Providers Association

Wayne Thompson, Weatherization/Housing Director, Tri-County Opportunities Council, Rock Falls

Phyllis Logan, Vice-President, Voice of the Community Ministerial Association, Chicago

Sean Guza, Independence Center Member, Waukegan Independence Center