

June 23, 2010

Sen. Daniel K. Inouye, Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
U. S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Sen. Thad Cochran, Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
U. S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Sen. Herb Kohl, Chairman
Subcommittee on Agriculture
Committee on Appropriations
U. S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Sen. Sam Brownback, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Agriculture
Committee on Appropriations
U. S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Rep. David Obey, Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
U. S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Rep. Jerry Lewis, Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
U. S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Rep. Rosa DeLauro, Chairwoman
Subcommittee on Agriculture
Committee on Appropriations
U. S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Rep. Jack Kingston, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Agriculture
Committee on Appropriations
U. S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senators and Representatives:

The undersigned organizations and individuals are very concerned about a portion of the US Department of Agriculture's proposed rural housing budget for FY 2011. Specifically we hope that the Congress can continue to fund -- at least at the 2010 level -- USDA's Multifamily Preservation and Revitalization (MPR) program and the Preservation Revolving Loan Fund (PRLF). Both are not in the President's request. Those very small but innovative programs are vital to the preservation of USDA's rural rental housing stock, which serves a largely elderly and disabled population with an average household income of less than \$11,000.

We are very encouraged that the President's budget includes funding for the USDA Section 515 rural rental program. But the MPR and PRLF programs, supplementing Section 515 and totaling only \$27 million in FY 2010, are also key components of an overall approach to housing the poorest and most vulnerable people. Congress created both of these programs in the FY 2006 appropriations bill for USDA and has funded them every year since.

These are also very successful programs. From 2006 through 2009 USDA financed a total of \$100 million in multi-family restructurings. This funding allowed the Department to provide assistance to preserve and renovate existing section 515 developments and vouchers for families who might be displaced in the event of prepayment. Requests for restructuring regularly total over \$2 billion per year. Since the beginning of the demonstration, USDA has financed some 300 transactions that will help preserve the homes of close to 10,000 tenants.

We work with a wide network of local nonprofits that use USDA, HUD and other programs to build and preserve affordable housing. Overall we feel the 2011 budget has strong proposals for affordable housing. But to preserve the homes of some of the lowest-income rural Americans, we would urge you to keep the MPR and PRLF programs as well.

Sincerely,

Adams & Brown Counties Economic Opportunities, Inc., Georgetown, Ohio
American Association of Homes and Services for the Aging, Washington, DC
Big Cypress Housing Corporation, Immokalee, Florida
Cabrillo Economic Development Corp., Ventura, California
California Coalition for Rural Housing, Sacramento, California
California Housing Partnership, San Francisco, California
CASA of Oregon, Newberg, Oregon
Champlain Housing Trust, Burlington, Vermont
City of Casa Grande, Casa Grande, Arizona
CDC of Brownsville, Brownsville, Texas
Coachella Valley Housing Coalition, Indio, California
Coalition for Economic Survival, Los Angeles, California
Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio, Columbus, Ohio
Community Action Partnership of Northwest Montana, Kalispell, MT
Community Economic Development Assistance Corporation, Boston, Massachusetts
Community Frameworks, Spokane, Washington
Community Housing Improvement Program (CHIP), Chico, California
Community Housing Initiatives, Inc., Spencer, Iowa
Council for Affordable and Rural Housing, Alexandria, Virginia
Will Cooper, Sr., Irvine, California
Delta Housing Development Corporation, Indianola, Mississippi
Devine & Gong, Inc., San Francisco, California
Enterprise Community Partners, Santa Fe, New Mexico
Everglades Housing Trust, Homestead, Florida
Federation of Appalachian Housing Enterprises, Berea, Kentucky
Raymond P. Finney, Realtor, Pagosa Springs, Colorado
Florida Home Partnership, Ruskin, Florida
Florida Non-Profit Housing, Inc., Sebring, Florida
Highland Community Builders, Inc., Elkins, West Virginia
Homes In Partnership, Apopka, Florida
Housing Assistance Council, Washington, DC
Housing Development Corp. Midatlantic, Lancaster, Pennsylvania
Housing Preservation Project, St. Paul, Minnesota
Laconia Area Community Land Trust, Laconia, New Hampshire
Little Dixie Community Action Agency, Hugo, Oklahoma
Little Manatee Housing Corporation, Ruskin, Florida
Local Initiatives Support Corporation, New York, New York
Mercy Housing, West Sacramento, California
Midwest Minnesota CDC, Detroit Lakes, Minnesota
Minnesota Housing Partnership, St. Paul, Minnesota
Mississippi Action for Community Education, Greenville, Mississippi
Moloka'i Community Service Council, Kaunakakai, Hawai'i
Motivation Education & Training, Inc., New Caney, Texas
National Affordable Housing Trust, Columbus, Ohio
National Council of State Housing Agencies, Washington, DC
National Housing Conference, Washington, DC
National Housing Law Project, Oakland, California
National Housing Trust, Washington, DC
National Low Income Housing Coalition, Washington, DC

NCALL, Dover, Delaware
Network for Oregon Affordable Housing, Portland, Oregon
New York State Rural Advocates, Blue Mt. Lake, New York
Northeast South Dakota Community Action Program (NESDCAP), Sisseton, South Dakota
Northern Initiatives, Marquette, Michigan
Ohio Capital Corporation for Housing, Columbus, Ohio
Oregon Opportunity Network, Portland, Oregon
Pathfinder Services, Huntington, Indiana
PathStone, Rochester, New York
People's Self-Help Housing Corporation, San Luis Obispo, California
Public Counsel, Los Angeles, California
Rural Community Assistance Corporation, West Sacramento, California
Rural Housing Development Corporation, Provo, Utah
Rural Neighborhoods, Inc., Florida City, Florida
Self Help Enterprises, Visalia, California
Self-Help Housing Corporation of Hawaii, Honolulu, Hawaii
South East Alabama Self-Help Association, Inc., Tuskegee, Alabama
Southern Mutual Help Association, Inc., New Iberia, Louisiana
Southwest Minnesota Housing Partnership, Slayton, Minnesota
Stewards of Affordable Housing for the Future, Washington, DC
Stop Abusive Family Environments (SAFE), Welch, West Virginia
Tamaqua Area Community Partnership, Tamaqua, Pennsylvania
Tierra del Sol Housing Corporation, Anthony, New Mexico
Universal Housing Development Corporation, Russellville, Arkansas
Umpqua CDC, Roseburg, Oregon
Washington State Housing Finance Commission, Seattle, Washington