



Entry Form 2017 Annual Awards for Program Excellence

Entry Deadline: Thursday, June 15, 2017, Midnight ET

Each entry must include a completed entry form. Please complete a form for each entry your HFA is submitting. The completed entry form will become the first page of your entry.

This form is a fillable PDF. Type your information into the entry form and save it as a PDF. Please do not write on or scan the entry form. **Questions: Call 202-624-7710 or email awards@ncsha.org.**

Entry Title: Enter your entry's title exactly as you wish it to be published on the NCSHA website and in the awards program.

Category:

Subcategory:

Entry Summary: A 15-word (max) summary of the program, project, or practice you are entering.

HFA:

HFA Staff Contact:

Phone:

Email:

Visual Aids:

Are you mailing to NCSHA 10 copies of any visual aids that cannot be included in your entry PDF? Yes No

Payment:

My HFA is mailing a check to NCSHA.
My HFA is emailing the credit card authorization form to awards@ncsha.org.

Agency's effort restores federal housing funds to half of state

The state's Housing Finance Agency's role in a new codes enforcement law has ended a stand-off that jeopardized the ability to use any housing funds from HUD, USDA or other federal sources in more than half of Tennessee's 95 counties and in 40 cities.

With its newly created Industry and Government Affairs (IGA) team, Tennessee Housing Development Agency (THDA) began a months-long effort to canvas members of the General Assembly before the 2017 legislative session. The goal: to get lawmakers to repair an issue created in August 2016 when the State Fire Marshal issued a blanket prohibition on state-licensed code inspectors to operate in jurisdictions that had opted out of the state's building code standard. The inability to get inspections of work effectively blocked all efforts to use federal housing funds, which have requirements of the state to certify work meets an established code standard.

The IGA team, consisting of its director, three field liaisons and a legislative liaison, met with the state's representatives and senators in key positions and those representing jurisdictions affected by the work stoppage order. Other outreach efforts included numerous one-on-one meetings, attending community sessions in the members' districts and participating in local government meetings. In these meetings, which often included concerned local officials, the team would explain why federally funded housing work could not proceed and ask for support of legislation drafted by the agency.

In issuing its order to halt inspections in opt-out communities, the State Fire Marshal's office inadvertently created a Catch-22 situation for recipients of federal housing funds, such as HUD's HOME or USDA's Rural Development. A compliance review had determined state-licensed inspectors were operating outside of legal authority, if they performed inspections in opt-out jurisdictions. The State Fire Marshal advised affected communities that, unless they adopted building codes, it was impossible to resume inspections. Only three communities chose to opt back into the statewide building code, while an additional one opted-out, during this time period.

For THDA, the work stoppage affected \$6,781,154 in projects in 20 jurisdictions on HOME grants that were issued between the years of 2012 to 2015. Unable to proceed, grantees were unable finish their obligations to help homeowners as deadlines to use the funds continued to tick down.

Fortunately, THDA's groundwork with legislators was successful in getting several key sponsors on board to introduce legislation.

In the house, Rep. Barry Doss [R] and his co-sponsors Rep. David Byrd [R]; Rep. Mike Carter [R] and Rep. Bill Sanderson [R] introduced HB 539 to authorize the state fire marshal to inspect an owner's building upon the owner's request to determine if the building meets the statewide safety standards even if the building is located in a county or municipality that has opted out of the statewide safety codes.

In the Senate, a companion bill, SB 1167, was sponsored by Sen. Joseph Hensley [R], and co-sponsored by Sen. Ken Yager [R], chairman of the powerful State and Local Government Committee which has oversight over legislation affecting state or local governments.

The proposed legislation passed through a total of five legislative committees without a single opposing vote and was approved on the Consent Agenda without discussion by both legislative bodies.

**Tennessee Housing Development Agency
Codes Enforcement Bill
Legislative Advocacy, State Advocacy**

The new law became effective immediately upon Governor Bill Haslam’s signature on May 4, 2017. As a result, THDA advised all grantees to resume work immediately.

THDA has also offered grantees flexibility on completion deadlines wherever possible, since projects were essentially on hold for nine months.

In subsequent meetings with the Fire Marshal’s Office, THDA was complimented on solving a thorny statewide issue without requiring action by every local governing body. In establishing a new legal framework – to allow state-licensed building inspectors to perform inspections anywhere in the state by the request of a property owner – the Fire Marshal believes fewer deaths from structural deficiencies or fires in commercial or residential structures will result from more inspections, driven by insurers and lenders seeking to protect property and investment in developments.

A Memorandum of Understanding between THDA and the State Fire Marshal, which is part of the Department of Commerce and Insurance, is being developed to provide building inspections for renovations, which are not typically subject to inspections.

	GRANTEE	CITY	COUNTY	GRANT YEAR	AMOUNT FUNDED
1	Cocke County	N/A	Cocke County	2012	\$375,000
2	Claiborne County	N/A	Claiborne County	2013	\$250,000
3	Coalmont	City of Coalmont	Grundy County	2013	\$200,000
4	Franklin County	N/A	Franklin County	2013	\$250,000
5	Gruetli-Laager	Town of Gruetli-Laager	Grundy County	2013	\$200,000
6	Grundy County	N/A	Grundy County	2013	\$350,000
7	Lawrence County	N/A	Lawrence County	2013	\$250,000
8	ADFAC	N/A	Anderson County (E), Campbell County (E) & Morgan County (O)	2013	\$437,903
9	Creative Compassion (CHDO)	N/A	Fentress County	2013	\$209,906
10	Loretto	City of Loretto	Lawrence County	2014	\$258,345
11	McNairy County	N/A	McNairy County	2014	\$375,000
12	Clinch-Powell RCD (CHDO)	N/A	Grainger County (O) Hamblen County (E)	2014	\$375,000
13	Slayden	Town of Slayden	Dickson County	2014	\$250,000
14	Vanleer	Town of Vanleer	Dickson County	2014	\$250,000
15	Bledsoe County	N/A	Bledsoe County	2015	\$500,000
16	Fentress County	N/A	Fentress County	2015	\$375,000
17	Johnson County	N/A	Johnson County	2015	\$500,000
18	McMinn County	N/A	McMinn County	2015	\$500,000
19	Scott County	N/A	Scott County	2016	\$375,000
20	Unicoi County	N/A	Unicoi County	2016	\$500,000

TOTAL: \$6,781,154

NOTE: The Towns of Decaturville, Huntsville and Loretto opted into the State program since 9/15/16 and were removed from this listing.

NOTE: The Town of Gruetli-Laager opted out since 9/15/16. No letter was sent to community regarding THDA request to hold grant in abeyance as THDA did not learn of opt out until Winter 2017, but administrator aware of issue.