

LEGISLATIVE #

110074

July 7, 2011

The Honorable _____
U. S. House of Representative
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable _____
U. S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

RE: Funding Threats to the FY 12 CDBG and HOME Programs

Dear Representative _____:

As the chief elected official/Mayor of the City of Gainesville, I am writing this letter on behalf of my community to express our support of the U.S. Housing and Urban Development (HUD) grants for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME) programs; and to voice our opposition to any threatened cuts or elimination of these programs in FY 2012.

I am extremely concerned about the proposed budget cuts to the CDBG and HOME Programs as these grants have been an invaluable source of funding for the City of Gainesville for many years. The CDBG and HOME funding is a vital resource to our community, providing funding for projects and services that directly impact the lives of our low-income citizens. The CDBG and HOME Programs have made it possible for the City of Gainesville to work with nonprofit organizations to develop and implement programs designed to meet the specific needs of our low-income residents and community. If the proposed budget cuts transpire, it will drastically endanger our ability to provide critical programs and services to thousands of low-income families.

For your reference, attached is a CDBG/HOME Program Fact Sheet providing a summary of some of the accomplishments of important projects within the Gainesville community that have been funded with CDBG and HOME Program funding during the past year. Without CDBG and HOME funding these projects could not have been assisted. CDBG and HOME Program funding provides the flexibility to fund a variety of program activities, including leveraging and attracting additional resources to projects. This combination of CDBG and HOME with other resources adds to our local economy through the purchase of goods and services and adds to the betterment of the lives of our local citizenry through improved neighborhoods and services.

The CDBG and HOME Program funding goes to service providers, builders, contractors, and local businesses who transform the neighborhoods in which they conduct business. Continued funding for CDBG and HOME Programs is crucial for our community as it connects private sector growth to the revitalization of entire communities. These projects have literally revitalized entire neighborhoods to the point of making the neighborhood a viable and safe community to live in. With the local government contributing to various human/public services projects and filling in the financial gaps to the non-projects agencies have resourced in millions of dollars leveraged. Without these funds, needed leveraged dollars will be decreased.

The CDBG and HOME Program funding is being threatened for further cuts at the federal level at a time when many local governments are struggling to keep budgets balanced. In FY 2011, the CDBG Program budget was reduced by approximately 16.2% and the HOME Program was reduced approximately 9%. This funding reduction threat continues into the FY12 budget year with further proposed cuts to the CDBG and HOME Programs. Any funding reduction in the CDBG and HOME Programs would severely cripple our community.

The CDBG and HOME Programs funds are vital resources to our community and impacts various projects and services that directly impact the lives of our low-income citizens. Though cuts to the CDBG and HOME programs would have a minor impact on reducing the federal budget deficit, they will slow and eliminate thousands of projects that leverage public and private funds into new jobs and developments of lifelong worth to the community.

Additionally, CDBG and HOME funding is important to local government budgets and to the low-income households served by these programs. If not for CDBG and HOME, many projects centered around public services, infrastructure, housing rehabilitation, nutritional support, economic development and the homeless would not be funded locally. The City of Gainesville's local budget is stretched and has been for a number of years. Without CDBG and HOME, we do not have the resources available to fund the aforementioned program activities at a meaningful level, which would result in a devastating impact on the Gainesville community.

Therefore, we respectfully request for you to oppose any legislation that would eliminate or reduce funding in the CDBG and HOME Programs for FY 2012.

Sincerely,

Honorable Craig Lowe, Mayor
City of Gainesville, Florida

Cc: Members of the City Commission
Russ Blackburn, City Manager
Fred Murry, Assistant City Manager
Jackie Richardson, Housing & Community Development Manager



FACT SHEET
CDBG / HOME PROGRAMS ACCOMPLISHMENTS
For The Past Year – FY 2009/2010

- For every one dollar of CDBG funding another \$16.00 in private and public funding was leveraged.
- Total HOME Program matched dollars contributed was \$1,326,670.
- A total of 81,390 persons/households were assisted through the CDBG and HOME Programs.
- CDBG funds in the amount of \$92,468 were spent on public improvements, such as the development and improvements public facilities, street and sidewalk improvements, water and sewer improvements, senior centers and child care facilities, and the development of parks and recreational facilities, among others.
- CDBG funds in the amount of \$257,210 were expended on public services, such as services for senior and youth projects, health services, employment training, services for abused and neglected children, homeless, and services for the disabled, among others.
- CDBG and HOME Programs funds in the amount of \$1,243,577 were provided for housing activities, such as new construction, homeowner rehabilitation, homebuyer assistance, lead-based paint testing and abatement, mortgage foreclosure intervention and housing counseling.
- The City of Gainesville contracted with five (5) Minority Businesses assisting with CDBG and HOME funded Activities.
- The City of Gainesville assisted 588 persons with housing counseling services.

Federal, State, Local, Public and Private Partnerships



New Construction-Infill Housing (The Foundation)



New Construction-Infill Housing (Side One Lifted)



New Construction-Infill Housing (Side Two Lifted)



Roof Program- Roof Replacement (Before)



Roof Program- Roof Replacement (After)



Homeowner Rehabilitation- (Minor Rehab Before) Homeowner Rehabilitation- (Minor Rehab After)



Homeowner Rehabilitation- (Major Rehab Before) Homeowner Rehabilitation- (Major Rehab After)



Homeowner Rehabilitation- (Major Rehab Before) Homeowner Rehabilitation- (Major Rehab After)



Housing Rehabilitation- Before



Housing Rehabilitation- After

New Construction- Porter's Garden (Minor Subdivision Development)





House Reconstruction- Before



House Reconstruction- During (Demolished)



House Reconstruction Program – After



Public Infrastructure- Duval Area Neighborhood



Park Improvements- Pleasant Street Neighborhood

Code Enforcement



Homeless Programs



Medical Care/Services- Homeless Persons



Cold Night Shelter-Homeless Persons



Youth Programs-Nutritional Support



Youth Programs- Afterschool Program