



Michigan Disability Housing Workgroup

May 24, 2012

STATE REPRESENTATIVE
The Honorable Earl Poleski
State Representative
State Capitol
P.O. Box 30014
Lansing, MI 48909-7514

Dear Representative Poleski:

We urge you to support the Attorney General's recommendations regarding the disbursement of the National Mortgager Service Settlement funds. As part of those recommendations totaling \$97 million, the Michigan Disability Housing Work Group, a collaborative of disability related organizations representing thousands of members advocating for affordable housing, in particular supporting the 10% of the funds mentioned above (\$9.7 million) designated for capitalizing the Michigan Housing and Community Development Fund (MHCDF). These important funds will provide the state much needed accessible, affordable housing options for people with a disability and low-income families.

The Housing Trust Fund was originally funded in 2008 with TANF funds and the effort to recapitalize has been led by Senator Jansen (R-Grand Rapids). The Attorney General's recommendations passed out of the Senate the last week of April as part of the budget process and we seek your support as it moves through the Conference Committee.

The Michigan Housing and Community Development Fund was very successful when initially created in 2008. Projects through the fund leveraged \$1 of MHCDF to \$11 of public/private sources (\$2,163,400 appropriated; \$24,041,009 investment leveraged). Thousands of jobs were created generating millions of dollars in state and local taxes. Lastly, the funds are targeted to programs that support Governor Snyder's emphasis on placemaking – a vital tool in bringing Michigan's economy back.

The MHCDF will aid in overcoming Michigan's affordable housing crisis. Throughout the US, only 30 units for every 100 renters are affordable. Michigan is lower than the national average, as there are just 27 affordable rental homes, available for every 100 extremely low income renter households. In order to afford the fair market rent in the State for a two-bedroom apartment, a

Member Organizations

Ann Arbor Center for Independent Living • Capitol Area Center for Independent Living • Community Housing Network, Inc.
Disability Advocates of Kent County • Disability Network Lakeshore • Disability Network Mid Michigan • Disability Network Southwest Michigan
Disability Network Michigan • Michigan Developmental Disability Council • Michigan Disability Rights Coalition
Southwest Counseling Solutions • Superior Alliance for Independent Living • The Disability Network • United Cerebral Palsy of Michigan

minimum wage earner must work 77 hours per week, 52 weeks per year. Michigan's residents are being hit by both unaffordable housing barriers and lower wages – forcing many to make unrealistic choices. (Information in this paragraph can be found in the National Low Income Housing Coalition's *Out of Reach Report*, 2012)

We hope you will join the twenty-five statewide trade organizations representing more than 5,000 members in supporting the Attorney General's plan for dispersing the National Mortgager Service Settlement. Michigan needs your help in ensuring that all people have access to affordable housing options.

Sincerely,



Paul D. Ecklund

Chairperson

Michigan Disability Housing Work Group(MDHWG)

Web: <http://mdhwg.org>

Phone: (269)345-1516

E-mail: ecklundp@dnswm.org