



Michigan Disability Housing Workgroup

October 29, 2015

Mr. Andrew Martin
Michigan State Housing and Development Authority
735 East Michigan Avenue
P.O. Box 30044
Lansing, MI 48909

Re: LIHTC 2017-2018 Qualified Allocation Plan

The Michigan Disability Housing Workgroup respectfully submits the following comments and recommendations regarding the proposed Michigan Qualified Allocation Plan (QAP) for 2017 - 2018:

The Housing workgroup strongly believes in the Supreme Courts' *Olmstead Decision* which focused on least restrictive and most integrated settings. The current point system encourages developments of concentrated low income and supportive housing which is problematic for integrated holistic communities. Greater incentives for mixed economics are needed with a lowered percentage of supportive housing units per development and less points for targeting low income.

By encouraging projects in low income revitalizing neighborhoods without also developing affordable housing in more economically affluent neighborhoods it could be interpreted as fostering segregation. This was recently demonstrated in a supreme Court decision on "Disparate Impact" where, even though it was not intentional, the defendant was found to be practicing discrimination by building exclusively in low income and ethnic neighborhoods. ([*Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs v. The Inclusive Communities Project, Inc.*](#)).

The Housing workgroup applauds MSHDA for encouraging 10% of the units to be Barrier Free, which is above Fair Housing Act requirements.

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

However, how effective has the current point system been on encouraging more Barrier Free units? If the units have has a significant increase in numbers than continue the current point system. If on the other hand, if there has not been a significant increase than the points need to go up to incentivize developers. We suggest an additional 5 points.

The Housing Workgroup also strongly believes the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design and Michigan barrier Free Design Code is the bare bones minimum of what a facility can use and be called legally accessible. It is recommended to encourage through point incentives to build more accessibly friendly Universal Designed housing. The Department of Natural Resources has had a great deal of success with this by encouraging Universal Design concepts in its competitive Trust Fund Grants. It is recommended to give an extra 3 points for developers that go beyond basic access code and use Universal Design.

We appreciate the opportunity to share our point of view and would welcome future opportunities for dialogue regarding the QAP and other housing-related issues.

Sincerely,



Paul Ecklund (Chair)
Michigan Disability Housing Workgroup
Phone: (269) 345-1516 ext. 117
E-mail: ecklundp@dnswm.org
Website: <http://www.mdhwg.org>