



Celebrating 45 years of Hope. Help. Change.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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OUR PROMISE:

Community Action changes people's lives, embodies the spirit of hope, improves communities & makes America a better place to live. We care about the entire community and are dedicated to helping individuals help themselves and each other.

OUR VISION:

Washington County's residents are strong, resilient, involved in the community, and live with dignity and security.

OUR MISSION:

In partnership with the community, Community Action assists low-income people to achieve self-determination.

Jerralynn Ness
Executive Director

Ron Sarazin
Board Chair

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Hillsboro, OR 97123
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PRESIDENT'S BUDGET ELIMINATES COMMUNITY ACTION FUNDING; THREATENS RESOURCES FOR MOST VULNERABLE

Hillsboro (February 14, 2011) – On February 9, 2011, the new House Appropriations Committee budget package eliminated funding of the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) for the balance of the 2011 fiscal year, effective March 4, 2011. In addition, President Obama's budget requests a 50% cut in CSBG funding for fiscal year 2012 and a plan to eliminate state formula based allocations, replacing the current system with a competitive grants process. The Community Services Block Grant provides core funding for Community Action Agencies, including Community Action in Washington County.

While the President emphasized in his most recent State of the Union Address that "it is important not to balance the budget on the backs of the most vulnerable", according to Community Action Executive Director Jerralynn Ness the immediate loss of 2011 CSBG funds and the projected reduction of available funds in 2012 will threaten programs that stabilize low-income families and create opportunities for self-sufficiency. "As we learned at the onset of the recession, Community Action has never been more relevant and more necessary, and we continue to play a critical role in the economic recovery of families and communities. CSBG funds are vital to a number of our programs and also provide us with the means to leverage non-federal dollars, which constitute the larger portion of our agency's annual budget." Ness noted that Community Action's 2010-11 CSBG allocation of \$367,473 is generating over \$11 million in non-federal support, or \$31 for every one federal CSBG dollar invested, to help families achieve economic stability in Washington County. "These funds offer the flexibility to develop and operate programs that address important community concerns as they emerge. More importantly, they help us engage local governments, businesses, faith communities and nonprofit partners in solutions that support economic security for all Washington County residents."

"The values of Community Action are consistent with the values of our diverse community", said Ron Sarazin, current Community Action board chair and president of Olympic Performance, Inc. "When families are facing economic difficulties, like those brought on by the recession, we all want a place for them to turn to as they get back on their feet. Community Action provides services that help people help themselves. It is the fix for many of the problems in our social system and more people than ever are turning to Community Action for help. A cut in CSBG funding will have a significant impact in the support provided because CSBG funds are used to match and thus make available other funds. This is not the time to decrease these core resources."

Community Action is a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit organization that has served Washington County's most vulnerable families since 1965. Responding to more than 30,000 requests for assistance each year, the agency is currently investing CSBG funds in:

- Prenatal and parenting services to support healthy births and prevent child abuse and neglect.
- The 211Info collaboration, maintaining current Washington County resource data to connect families seeking information and referrals to critical health and human services.
- Engaging volunteers and providing training opportunities to increase effectiveness and efficiencies in achieving the organization's mission.
- Creating system changes to meet the complexity of family needs in a more comprehensive and holistic manner.
- Providing community education to increase understanding about local needs and engagement in collaborative solutions with private, public, faith based and nonprofit partners.

"For 45 years, our community has consistently demonstrated its confidence in our unique ability to provide a hand up to those in Washington County who struggle to make ends meet," concluded Ness. "At the end of the day, our work has been and will continue to be driven by the needs of our residents, including countless children, who are negatively impacted by the economy or lack opportunities to achieve economic security. Federal and State budget challenges impact us all, but it is these families who will be hurt the most if Community Action is not there to help."

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City of Tualatin

www.ci.tualatin.or.us

February 23, 2011

Senator Ron Wyden
2223 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510-3703

RE: SUPPORT COMMUNITY SERVICE BLOCK GRANT

Dear Senator Wyden:

On behalf of the Tualatin City Council, I'm writing this letter to encourage you to support federal funding of the Community Service Block Grant (CSBG) program. Over the past nineteen years, I have served on the Community Action Organization Board of Directors in Washington County and can attest to the value these funds bring to our community. In the City of Tualatin and throughout Washington County, the CSBG program provides integral funding of services that assist our most vulnerable citizens.

Amidst the Great Recession, the mission and services provided by Community Action has become more relevant than at any time in its 45 year history. Our community has experienced dramatic increases in requests for rent and energy bill assistance during the past year. With high levels of unemployment and under-employment, Community Action provides a lifeline for many of our residents. Further, our entire community is depending on CSBG funding to be essential in our economic recovery.

Despite the challenging economic climate, Community Action has built on CSBG funding to gather additional non-federal resources. Specifically, for every federal CSBG dollar, Community Action has leveraged an additional \$30 from other funding sources.

The City of Tualatin and other service organizations such as Community Action, share many of the same fiscal concerns as the federal government. However, at this time of unprecedented need among our most vulnerable citizens, we cannot afford to diminish the programs and services that our community depends on for basic needs. On behalf of the Tualatin City Council, I encourage you to preserve CSBG at current funding levels for the 2012 federal budget.

Sincerely,

Lou Ogden
Mayor, City of Tualatin



CITY of BEAVERTON

4755 S.W. Griffith Drive, P.O. Box 4755, Beaverton, OR 97076 TEL: (503) 526 2481 Fax (503) 526 2571

DENNY DOYLE
MAYOR

February 23, 2011

Honorable Jeff Merkley
107 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510
(202) 228-3997 - fax

Dear Senator Merkley:

Recent news of President Obama's budget recommendations, in particular the potential reduction or elimination of the Community Service Block Grant (CSBG) program, is of great concern to me because of the direct impact it will have on low-income residents I represent in Beaverton, Oregon. As the Mayor of Beaverton, I have served on the Community Action Board of Directors in Washington County since January of 2009 and can attest not only to the organization's overall effectiveness, but the key role it plays in our community to address issues of economic security.

Community Action programs are one of the best investments our federal government makes to effectively address poverty in America. **For every federal CSBG dollar invested in our local Community Action, they are raising an additional \$30 in non-federal funds to ensure that services exist to help stabilize our most vulnerable citizens.**

I know of no other organization that has this ability to produce a 30 fold ROI. The last program that should be cut is the one *not actually run by the government*. Community Action is designed and led by our local communities to create unique local solutions. This ensures that services are relevant to the specific needs of our low-income residents and that resources can be leveraged to involve all sectors of the community.

Community Action is a highly regarded and trusted organization in our community. Over the past four decades and even more so during the recession, Community Action has been a leader and a partner in our local response to issues that impact low-income families. While we are all hopeful that the projected economic recovery will begin to be felt here in Oregon, the slow return of jobs means that Community Action is more relevant then ever before. So many families who would never have needed help are struggling to stay afloat as they compete for the few jobs that are available. This is not the

Senator Merkley
February 23, 2011
Page Two

time to remove one of the few lifelines providing hope for thousands of unemployed and under-employed Beaverton residents. We are depending on Community Action to continue to play a key role as we work toward economic recovery in Beaverton.

I have witnessed firsthand the power that our Community Action has to transform lives and strengthen communities. Since 1965, they have been there for those who work hard but struggle to achieve economic security. **I urge you to preserve CSBG in the existing funding model and at existing funding levels for the current cycle and in the 2012 budget.** These flexible funds help create opportunities for our most vulnerable residents and engage our entire community in the fight against poverty. At this time of unprecedented need, we cannot afford to diminish the potential for all of our citizens to thrive by reducing the effectiveness of Community Action.

Please call me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Denny Doyle".

Denny Doyle
Mayor

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 16, 2011

The Honorable Daniel Inouye
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Vice-Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Inouye and Vice-Chairman Cochran:

As the Senate works toward completing action on the Fiscal Year 2011 appropriations bills, we urge you to preserve funding for one of the most effective federal programs for promoting economic development, the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program. We ask that in any short or long term continuing resolution you maintain the Fiscal Year 2010 level of \$3.984 billion in formula funding for the program.

CDBG is the centerpiece of the federal government's efforts to help more than 1,200 cities, counties, and states meet the needs of low- and moderate-income persons. CDBG is one of the most effective federal domestic programs to revitalize communities with proven results. It helps fund a wide-range of activities, including housing-related assistance, public improvements, public services, and economic development projects. Any reduction in CDBG funding would severely slow down or eliminate thousands of local and state projects and programs that are directly contributing to local and regional recovery. Based on data that grantees have reported to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development over the past six years, the CDBG program has:

- Assisted 865,874 low- and moderate-income households through single-family and multifamily residential rehabilitation, homeownership assistance, energy efficient improvements and lead-based paint abatement;
- Created or retained 259,346 jobs for low- and moderate-income persons through a variety of economic development activities;
- Benefitted 22,998,047 low- and moderate-income households through such public improvements as the development of senior centers, child care centers, and centers for the disabled;
- Benefitted 73,863,286 low- and moderate-income households through public services such as employment and training, youth services, meals and other assistance to the elderly, and services for abused and neglected children; and
- Every \$1.00 of CDBG leverages an additional \$1.62 in non-CDBG funding.

This is an impressive track record that grantees have compiled in their wise stewardship of the

program. Grantees distribute CDBG funds through a large network of local organizations that provide direct assistance to low- and moderate-income beneficiaries. In this current economic climate the need to maintain services and assistance to low- and moderate-income households is overriding. Maintaining CDBG formula funding at its FY10 level of \$3.948 billion would maintain the commitment to these households. Therefore, we strongly urge you to provide this minimum funding level.

Sincerely,

Patrick Leahy

Kirsten E. Hillibrand

Bob Carey, Jr.

John F. Kerry

Jim Webb

Carl Levin

Paul Brown

Jeffrey A. Merkley

Bill Blaine

Mark Warner

Bob Anderson

Max Baucus

John Cornyn

Bill Nelson

Tom Harkin

Jeanne Shaheen

Ben Cardin

Jay Rockefeller

Robert Meneay

Dominic Pini

Frank R. Laukenberg

Rebecca Stetson

Amy Klobuchar

Chris Coons

John Qead
Al Franken

Samuel L. Hahn

Bob D.

Nich. Durbin