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Lashway, Lisa

From: NJLM - Municipal Clerks [njlm-clerks@cityconnections.com]
Sent: Tuesday, July 01, 2008 9:36 AM
To: Lashway, Lisa
Subject: Municipal Clerks from NJLM

		
LEAGUE ALERT		
Municipal Clerk: Please forward to Mayor and Governing Body.		
July 1 , 2008 RE: I. Full Funding for the Energy Block Grant II. Affordable Housing A. League Challenge of COAH Regulations B. Mayors' Housing Policy Committee		
Dear Mayor:		
I. Full Funding for the Energy Block Grant Funding the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) is a top legislative priority for America's municipalities.		
Last week, the House Appropriations Committee took action on the FY'09 Energy and Water Development Appropriations bill, which provided an initial commitment of \$295 million to support the startup of the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant program. On July 10, the Senate Appropriations Committee's Energy and Water Development Subcommittee is scheduled to take action.		
Please call Senators Lautenberg (202-224-3224) and Menendez (202-224-4744) and urge their support for funding the "Energy Block Grant" program at \$2 billion.		
We will urge the Senators to:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support full funding for Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant at \$2 billion for fiscal year 2009; since• Municipalities have been delivering innovative energy conservation and environmental protection programs for years; and• <u>Full funding will enable cities and towns to sustain the progress already</u>		

made and to support even broader local action to secure greater energy savings and independence for the nation.

For more information, contact Jon Moran at 609-695-3481, ext. 121.

II. Affordable Housing

A. League Challenge of COAH Regulations

B. Mayors' Housing Policy Committee

In the light of the passage of A-500/S-1783 and the promulgation of the new COAH regulations, I write to you update you on the status of affordable housing policy and local governments.

As you know, the League is preparing a legal challenge to the new COAH regulations, which were effective on June 2. The League has been accepting pledges from municipalities, and if you have not yet submitted a pledge but would like to, the pledge form is online at: <http://www.njslom.org/COAH-3rd-round-pledge.pdf>

We have until mid-July to file with the Court, and the League will file in advance of that deadline. For more on the forthcoming League challenge of the COAH regulations, please see our Dear Mayor letters of June 10 , April 18 and March 25 . Questions on the challenge can be directed to Mike Cerra at mcerra@njslom.com or at (609) 695-3481 x120.

As you know, the State Legislature, despite opposition from the League and the Urban Mayors Association, passed A-500/S-1783. This was done in spite of the fact that the 2.5% commercial fee will not pay for the housing COAH projects will result from commercial development. This was also done in spite of the fact that the legislation eliminated a compliance mechanism, regional contribution agreements, but failed to put in place any new mechanisms or financial incentives to facilitate the construction of affordable housing.

Because of this and other deficiencies in the new law, the sponsors have indicated that they will introduce legislation in the fall to address some of these concerns. While we have asked the Governor to veto, or at least conditionally veto, this legislation, prudence demands us to prepare in the event the Governor signs the bill as the Legislature passed.

Therefore, it is of the utmost importance that the concerns of local leaders be heard as the Legislature seeks reform. While it is unlikely we can reinstate RCA agreements, we can push for new ways for local governments to comply with their housing obligations, and we can push for new incentives to accommodate such housing.

Thus, League President Robert Bowser has directed us to reformulate our special RCA committee as a **new "Mayors' Housing Policy Committee,"** and to designate our existing COAH Committee as a subcommittee of the new

Mayor's Committee. The purpose of this committee will be to advocate a new housing policy for the State, reviewing the principles of the Mount Laurel decision, the intent of the Fair Housing Act, the State Plan and the principles of home rule and sound planning.

Mayor Bowser will co-chair the Committee, and has appointed Bridgewater Mayor Patricia Flannery as co-chair. Any Mayors interested in joining this committee should contact Mike Cerra at the contact information above.

We will continue to advise you of all developments. Thank you.

Very truly yours,

William G. Dressel, Jr.
Executive Director

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