

Agency Initially Rejected Group's Electronic Application Due To Minor Error

Binghamton, NY - Congressman Maurice Hinchey (D-NY) today urged U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Secretary Steve Preston to reconsider a \$2.4 million grant proposal by the Broome County Homeless Coalition that was recently rejected by the agency of a minor error associated with the electronic filing of the application. The congressman said Broome County's homeless population should not have to suffer without critical services because of lost federal funding from the grant.

"I am writing to express my strong interest in ensuring that the Broome County Homeless Coalition's request for Continuum of Care funding be given the utmost consideration," Hinchey wrote in a letter sent today to Secretary Preston. "As one who has worked closely with the agencies involved in the Coalition, I can tell you that the work this group performs is essential and critical in serving the homeless population in Greater Binghamton, New York. I request your assistance in resolving this matter in a manner that allows the Coalition to continue serving this most vulnerable population."

The \$2.4 million request covered 11 different grants would be split among several local organizations that help homeless individuals and families in Broome County. The funds would run for five years and would help pay for a variety of housing assistance initiatives as well as job counseling services.

"While I appreciate the fact that the Coalition's grant writers encountered difficulties in submitting the application appropriately, the cost of this filing error should not be borne out by the region's homeless residents," Hinchey wrote to Preston. "I am aware of reforms that have been put in place by the Coalition to prevent future problems in grant applications and am fully confident that this filing mistake is an aberration and not reflective of the excellent work the Coalition performs. As you may know, this Continuum of Care program consistency scores very highly on its applications and the service it renders to the community is highly regarded."

Broome County Homeless Coalition serves as an umbrella organization for the multiple groups that would administer the grant.

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November 21, 2008

The Honorable Steve Preston
Secretary
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban
Development
451 7th Street S.W.
Washington, DC 20410

RE: Broome County Continuum of Care, NY-511

Dear Secretary Preston,

I am writing to express my strong interest in ensuring that the Broome County Homeless Coalition's request for Continuum of Care funding be given the utmost consideration. As one who has worked closely with the agencies involved in the Coalition, I can tell you that the work this group performs is essential and critical in serving the homeless population in Greater Binghamton, New York. I request your assistance in resolving this matter in a manner that allows the Coalition to continue serving this most vulnerable population.

While I appreciate the fact that the Coalition's grant writers encountered difficulties in submitting the application appropriately, the cost of this filing error should not be borne out by the region's homeless residents. I am aware of reforms that have been put in place by the Coalition to prevent future problems in grant applications and am fully confident that this filing mistake is an aberration and not reflective of the excellent work the Coalition performs. As you may know, this Continuum of Care program consistency scores very highly on its applications and the service it renders to the community is highly regarded. I urge you to work with the Coalition to find a solution that allows, at the very minimum, the continuation of current programs. Thank you for considering my views on this important matter.

Best regards.

Sincerely,

Maurice D. Hinchey