

TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY AFFAIRS
RECOVERY AND REINVESTMENT ACT
PUBLIC HEARING

Weatherization Assistance Program
Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing
Community Services Block Grant

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TDHCA STAFF:

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ON THE RECORD REPORTING
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PROCEEDINGS

MR. CAMPBELL: Thank you all for joining us today. It's a little awkward because we've kind of got this big gulf separating us but we really are eager to hear what you have to say about three topics, the Weatherization funds that are part of the stimulus package, the Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing funds from the ARRA stimulus package, and then the Community Services Block Grant part fund from the package. We don't know a whole lot about that one yet; we're still waiting to hear exactly on the rules. But if you have any thoughts on it we more than welcome your input.

Today is really more about us listening to you. We are eager to hear and value your input. That's why we are having three input sessions, one today here in Houston, tomorrow in Dallas, and Wednesday in El Paso. If you haven't done so already, there are sign-up sheets at the front there. And if you could just indicate what issue you would like to speak on, just feel free to check it.

Just to kind of give you a little bit of a timeline, these funds require that we send the respective departments, the Department of Energy and the Department of Urban and Housing Development plans on how we intend on spending them. The board will be taking a look at our plans at the end of this month, April 23, and your input and the input of the other public sessions will help shape those plans. So we again thank you very much for taking the time.

Right now I'm going to turn it over to Amy who's going to introduce our first topic and then provide an opportunity -- and just one other

housekeeping. We are transcribing these sessions so if you are going to make a comment, and we welcome everyone to do so, please approach the center mike so we can make sure that your comments are properly recorded.

Amy?

MS. OEHLER: Okay. Thank you. Good morning again. We're so glad that you're here today. We certainly hope to hear from you on any combination of the programs that you'd like to speak about. I want to just do a little bit of a recap on the Weatherization Assistance Program funds that are part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

TDHCA will receive approximately \$327 million for the State of Texas. And as Stuart mentioned, we received the grant guidance on March 12 and that basically laid out the rules for the programs as well as the allocation amount. There is a comprehensive state plan that's due to the Department of Energy on May 12 and, certainly, one of the reasons we're here today is to hear from you.

We have a proposed plan -- there's a handout at the front of the room where we've detailed our proposed plan. And then on the back side of that it gives some of the more specific numbers that correlate to our plan. And so we want to hear your comments that are directly associated to the proposal, but even if there's something beyond this, we want to hear from you as well.

Again, our board meets -- our governing board meets on April 23 and there's a public comment period at the beginning of that board meeting where you're certainly able and willing to make comments. Our board will be

voting on the draft plan, and assuming that there aren't any substantive changes, that is the plan that will be submitted to the Department of Energy May 12.

I wanted to talk a little about -- at the moment we have an existing network of providers that are 34 nonprofits and units of local government across the state and they serve all 254 counties in the state. And those contractors have been working with the department for many years and we very much value the work that those nonprofits and units of local government have provided over the years.

Because of the amount of funding that's coming -- it's about 55 times our regular allocation. We typically receive about \$6 million, and as I mentioned, we'll receive about \$327 million dollars, we really wanted to be creative and make sure that we're going to find the most efficient service delivery model to make sure that the most homes can receive weatherization throughout the state.

And so what we've proposed is to allocate 140 million to the existing subrecipient network and then to allocate 140 million to cities that have a population over 75,000. And on the back of your sheet it details those cities. And then the third amount of funding, we have proposed making that available to the balance of the state. So basically, any city, county, nonprofit, unit of local government that falls below the 75,000 would also be eligible to apply for these funds.

I also wanted to go over a few of the changes from the existing Department of Energy Weatherization program compared to the ARRA funds.

And those are detailed at the bottom of the first page. At the moment the Department of Energy allows providers to spend up to \$3,000 per unit and this will have an increase up to 6,500. That's the maximum that can be spent per unit.

And just so everyone is aware, the funds are allowed to be used for single-family, multifamily and manufactured homes. And they're also intended to serve homeowners as well as renters. And so really there's not a housing stock or a household that would not qualify for these funds. At the moment we serve families at or below 125 percent of federal poverty. The Act allows states to decide if they'd like -- it gives them the flexibility, basically, to go up to 200 percent of the federal poverty guidelines.

There's another change that was implemented with the ARRA funds and that is that there's a rule about reweatherization. What that means is you cannot serve a home that has already received weatherization services after September 30, 1994. But homes that were weatherized before that could receive additional weatherization.

The other difference is that the Department of Energy has historically encouraged and required a whole-house assessment which involves a computerized energy audit to be conducted on every unit. We're working with the Department of Energy right now to get a priority list approved. And basically, if it's approved, we would only need to do an audit on 10 percent of the homes that are weatherized in Texas. And so we'll certainly keep the public updated on that issue but we're hoping to have a priority list of measures.

There's one piece of the legislation that the Department of Energy is still trying to make a determination on and that is the prevailing wages requirement in the Davis Bacon Act. That has historically not applied to the Weatherization Assistance Program and the way that the Act was written -- it was written in such a way where it seems as if that will apply to all ARRA funding, but the U.S. Department of Energy is trying to work with their attorneys to see if there's any way around that particular issue.

And so, at the moment, we still don't know if that's something that will be required. And if it is, the big change is not so much -- what we found is that most contractors already pay above the Davis Bacon wage rates, but the issue really becomes the monitoring of that. TDHCA would have a pretty hefty responsibility to make sure that we were monitoring that and then each of the entities that received funds would also have to make sure -- they'd have to verify and document that the contractors were paying their staff a certain wage rate. So really it's cut more, I guess, administrative-type work or burden. And so as soon as we have more word on that we'll certainly let you know.

So at this time we'd really -- as Stuart mentioned, the purpose of today is to hear from you. And so we want to go ahead and open it up and -- I don't know. Are we --

MR. CAMPBELL: Yes. We have a list of folks who have indicated they'd like to speak on a particular topic. For this section we'd like to keep it to weatherization and then we'll talk about the other issues after. And I'm just going to go down the list of individuals who've expressed an interest to provide some input, and if you haven't checked the box and you do want to

speak, feel free to step up to the mike after -- when there's a lull.

But I'm just going to start down the list and if you've checked this and decide you don't want to testify -- or provide input, you're more than welcome to, but when you do come up, please state your name and if you're representing someone or an organization for the record.

The first individual who has indicated an interest on speaking is Robert Phillips.

MR. PHILLIPS: And Linda Black is also joining me from the United Way. And what we want to do today -- because 55 times the normal amount's a lot of money. And if you're going to be putting together a plan to submit to the Feds we want you to feel comfortable about the funds that are going to be coming in to Harris County and that we'll be able to spend these with ease and look forward to some additional funds coming as well.

And those are -- and while that's easy to say we want to tell you about the program that we will use in order to do so. Before I do, just -- since it's being recorded and others may not know who we are, we are the subrecipient of weatherization funds in Harris County and have been for more than 25 years, and more than 12 years now for the utility assistance funds and have -- in addition to those dollars, we've also raised private sector dollars ourselves, \$3-1/2 million from Shell for weatherization funds over a three-year period.

And, then, in 1998 when it was the hottest summer on record up until just a few years ago, we raised \$3 million during that period of time in addition to the fund that came in from TDHCA. So we do have a lot of

experience in doing so; we have a large staff and we have ten full-time weatherization staff in addition to the other infrastructure and services that we have for the elderly.

We'll be talking about two models that we're going to be using in this year's approach and they're modeled after Care for Elders which is a Robert Wood Johnson-funded national project and then under it is the service access, the access network which is a collaboration involving the city as well as other organizations and the United Way.

So I thought it might be worthwhile for you to hear that and hear how a public/private collaborative works.

Linda?

MS. BLACK: Okay. The Access Network of Care for Elders started as a result of a study that was done over five years ago when we found that one of the most -- the biggest concern seniors had was where do I call if I need help. And what we started as Access Network using 2-1-1 Texas United Way help line number as the number to call, an easy-to-remember number. And we have information and referral specialists available 24 hours a day seven days a week to answer those calls.

We initiated and enhanced INR for seniors that have multiple problems and recognize that sometimes you need case management. So a whole system has been developed from the initial entry point from 2-1-1 to enhanced INR to case management. And we have Jewish Family Service, Sheltering Arms Family Services, and a number of other organizations participating in that with the whole purpose of ensuring that seniors get the

help need and they don't fall through the cracks. And it's working beautifully.

MR. PHILLIPS: Okay. And just a minute ago I mentioned in 1998 when the funds came down from TDHCA and then we raised additional dollars, the methods that we went through doing that was engaging other organizations and that's the model that we've followed now for eleven years. And what our approach is going to be this year through our Weatherization program is to follow a very similar model you have once again.

And we even enhanced our model this year in our Utility Assistance Program by getting United Way's 2-1-1 involved with us. So we're fortunate to have them as a partner once again. But I think you also know that what's happened to the Texas Gulf Coast, Louisiana Gulf Coast and in Mississippi since 2005 and we've just been hammered by hurricanes. And the Greater Houston Long-Term Recovery Committee under the United Way is going to be a vital part of this.

And we wanted to touch on that and what role they would play, so Linda --

MS. BLACK: This is regarding the Greater Houston Long-Term Recovery Committee and our proposed collaboration with the Weatherization program. We found that we both serve the same vulnerable population: seniors, individuals with disabilities and lower-income families, and we thought it made sense to work together.

I want to just cite a couple of FEMA statistics that emphasize the importance of addressing these populations. According to FEMA, about 14 percent of the registrants in Harris County are over 60 where the population

is just 11 percent. Twenty-five percent of the registrants with over \$15,000 in damages are seniors. Also, 60 percent of the damaged homes are concentrated in about 26 zip codes. Fifteen of those zip codes, or more than 55 percent of the households, earn less than \$35,000 according to the 2000 Census.

So, very clearly, lower income and seniors have been disproportionately impacted by the hurricane. What we also know is that about 75 percent of the referrals to FEMA have been denied for housing assistance and other needs assistance. About 40 percent of those is because of either lack of damage or deferred maintenance, primarily deferred maintenance.

And I want to just describe sort of an example of how we think it would work for an individual. And this is an actual family. It's a single female, over 60 of age. She was denied by FEMA because of deferred maintenance. She hired a contractor and that contractor left town, so she got none of her repairs done. The Greater Houston Long-Term Recovery would replace the roof, do some inside work. We're thinking Weatherization would come in and do the insulation as well as the weather stripping, because you could actually, in her house, see daylight through the doors.

And then Greater Houston Long-Term Recovery would come in and do the final painting so that that senior, or individual, the family is fully restored. We think it's the best way to really stretch limited dollars but it's also the best way to holistically help families in need.

MR. PHILLIPS: Okay. And Linda mentioned just a minute ago

sometimes families need case management. And the impact of the hurricane on the Texas Gulf Coast was one that not only brought damage to their homes but to their ability to pay for food, to pay for utilities, and so it has a multitude of impacts on individuals. So therefore we would encourage you to consider going to 200 percent of poverty in the greater Houston area and other urban areas.

And I'd say that my model is what Medicare uses in reimbursement zones throughout the country and I believe even their Agency of Aging has that option in difference areas. But what that can mean to individuals is that they can begin to get their arms around the things that they've been faced with. And I turned my attention from just the senior population from just a minute -- to those that I'm most concerned with.

We know in Harris County families living at 200 percent of poverty are only able to meeting basic needs. Let's think about that. 200 percent of poverty. Now, that's about \$40,000 a year, I think, for a family of four. That's not much money. And so they're not going to have the money to do the kind of preventive maintenance, must less do the kinds of things that we would like to. So I would encourage you to do that.

I assure you the approach that we're taking throughout the county and the organizations that we're going to use will allow us to reach the greatest diversity of Harris County and "rural areas" in Harris County as well. And so we'll begin all of this on April 17 at the United Way when we're hosting -- or actually the United Way's hosting a meeting of the United Way Agency executives to get them engaged, get those organizations involved in this

process at that time.

And then I asked them to have a representative at a meeting in a few weeks following that where we will actually begin doing the administrative training to get them so that they can begin to help qualify people. That's a model that's worked very well for us in our Utility Assistance program in using 2-1-1 this year.

I'd like to entertain any questions. Now, if you might have any.

MR. CAMPBELL: Thank you very much.

BY MS. BLACK: Thank you.

MR. PHILLIPS: Okay. Thank you.

MR. CAMPBELL: I want to welcome Congressman Al Green, joining us today. Please feel free to step up if you'd like to make any comments.

CONGRESSMAN GREEN: Thank you. I promise you I will be very brief and I thank you for this great opportunity. I want to commend you for hosting and having this hearing here in Houston. As you know we have been very busy in Washington, D.C., and we have accorded the State of Texas a fair amount of these federal dollars and I am confident that they will be spent efficaciously. But I came by today just to say a couple of words about the conditions that we are coping with here in Texas, and especially here in my City of Houston and my district which is the Ninth Congressional District.

I want to talk quickly about homelessness. As you probably know, we've got about 800,000 persons nationally who are sleeping on the

streets of life on any given night. 200,000, or about 1 percent of our population in the State of Texas, finds themselves homeless. And it depends on the definition, of course, and there are many definitions of what being homeless entails.

About 25 percent of the homeless people in Texas have mental illnesses; about 65,000 people have disabilities; 19 percent of the homeless persons are women. We find that children, school-aged children, are 125,000 of the homeless populations. Nationally -- this is the figure that we're greatly concerned with as well.

All of them create a great degree of consternation but this one has to do with our veteran population is about 30 to 40 percent of all homeless people. And approximately 200,000 persons who are veterans are homeless on any given night. In the State of Texas that's about 16,000; here in Houston that's about 2,500.

We want to do something about the homeless situation. We've done some things in Congress in terms of legislation, Homes for Heroes Act and some other things, but I think these funds are going to hopefully help many of our veterans who find themselves living on the streets of life.

In terms of the income levels, we find that about 3,117,609 Texans are at or below the poverty level, and 1.1 million Texans are hungry or at risk of hunger, generally speaking, on a given time during the year. Fifty percent of all minority working families are living in a category that we will label as below the poverty line.

Now, having given these numbers, I simply want to say thank

you again for doing what you can. We want to, as a part of the federal effort from the State of Texas, a part of this Texas delegation, make sure that we get our tax dollars brought back to our cities and to our state.

And, of course, you have to make some tough choices in terms of how these dollars are going to be allocated. I rarely get involved in the tough choices that you have to make because, quite frankly, I don't have the vote. I can give some degree of jawboning and make some statements but I'm hopeful that these dollars will be spent efficaciously because the need is clearly here.

And I will gladly answer any questions that you might have of a congressperson who sits on Financial Services, the Housing Subcommittee, and as well as Homeland Security,

MR. CAMPBELL: Well, thank you very much, Congressman. I appreciate your input.

Do we have any questions? I don't think we do.

We're in listening mode today mainly but your thoughts and input are greatly appreciated. Thank you very much.

CONGRESSMAN GREEN: Well, thank you very much. It was an honor to appear and thank the persons who have allowed me to step up to the microphone in this, what I would call, untimely fashion in that some other persons may have been ahead of me. I apologize and I promise I'm going to use the rest of the day very wisely.

MR. CAMPBELL: Great. Thank you very much, sir.

I do want to ask if there are any other elected officials who want

to come up and share your thoughts. Please, you're welcome to do so.

Going down the list, I'm not sure -- I just want to make sure that -- I can't tell if you checked this box or not but Gavin Dillingham, did you check the box to speak? No? Yes?

(No audible response.)

MR. CAMPBELL: Welcome.

MR. DILLINGHAM: Hello. My name is Gavin Dillingham. I've the director of special projects for General Services and also lead up the Weatherization program for the City of Houston. We've been in touch with you guys quite a bit in the last few months and have in the recent allocation the amount that is planned. And so we very much appreciate that and believe we can wisely use that money and would just like to continue to work with you guys in making sure we get as many homes weatherized as possible and make this the most efficient to process as possible. Thank you.

MR. CAMPBELL: Thank you. There's no name, but the individual representing Gladys House --

MS. HOUSE: Oh.

MR. CAMPBELL: If you'd like to please state your name.

MS. HOUSE: Gladys House. Is there a time limit?

MR. CAMPBELL: No, ma'am.

MS. HOUSE: Oh, okay. Sorry, folks.

MR. CAMPBELL: If you'd just say your name.

MS. HOUSE: No, I -- my name is Gladys House and I'm here
on --

MR. CAMPBELL: Oh. Gladys House. Okay. Thank you.

MS. HOUSE: I'm here on behalf of the Historic Freedman's Town Community, the CDC of Freedman's Town, the Black Contractors and Business Owners Association and Affordable Carpets, LLC d/b/a Carpet Depot. I know that we're now addressing weatherization but I just have a few questions of you. You can respond. Right?

MR. CAMPBELL: Sure.

MS. HOUSE: Oh, okay.

MR. CAMPBELL: We can respond. We're not sure that we'll have the answers necessarily because we'll still talking about --

MS. HOUSE: Well, you can say, yes, no, maybe. Okay. The weatherization -- and I just got this bit of information, it is -- are nonprofits and for profits eligible?

MS. OEHLER: Yes. Nonprofits and units of local government are eligible to apply for the funds. And it -- I assume -- are you in the Harris County of City of Houston area?

MS. HOUSE: Yes, both, but it goes to my next question.

MS. OEHLER: Okay.

MS. HOUSE: Is it any way that the nonprofits can receive the money directly from the state and not go through the city or the county because the politics are so great here it overwhelms us and we're never really given the opportunity to receive any monies, even CDBG moneys.

MS. OEHLER: Okay. Well, actually the way that the structure is set up in Houston is that Sheltering Arms Senior Services is the subrecipient

for Harris County for the weatherization funding. And they're here today so you might want to try and speak to them.

MS. HOUSE: But --

MS. OEHLER: Then --

MS. HOUSE: Go ahead. I'm sorry.

MS. OEHLER: Okay. And then this proposal that we've laid out today, the City of Houston would also receive an allocation. And so your organization could certainly partner with either Sheltering Arms or the city as far as making referrals. And that would really be up to your organization to work out the details. But as far as an allocation coming directly to your nonprofit that -- at the moment the structure isn't set up that way.

MS. HOUSE: Okay. Can the structure be changed to reflect such because too often grass nonprofit organizations and efforts are just overshadowed. We really don't get the services into our communities. It's not the United Way; it's our way, and it's the hardest way.

So this is why I think that your agency should rethink and review, going through the channels of the grass-roots nonprofit organizations because we do so much of the work and then when we step up to the plate your subrecipients really just give us the run around and put us on a long waiting list that never, ever happens.

And the City of Houston has a terrible reputation when it comes to implementing funding for such as you may have seen in writing or on the news reports. So the black taxpayers are just concerned that they never see or reap the benefits of all of these wonderful entities and projects and the

funding. And so that's why I raise that concern.

MR. CAMPBELL: Well, I appreciate you raising that concern and I'd like to hear more. Instead of us trying to answer yes or no on that particular question because we certainly can't make a decision on something like that --

MS. HOUSE: Yes, but you are receptive possibly going to route of ensuring that grass-roots nonprofit organizations receive the funding directly? Is it possible?

MS. BOSTON: Well, structurally, it is possible. I'll be candid with you and let you know that in our position at Texas Department of Housing, we're in the position of having to balance getting these funds out quickly --

MS. HOUSE: Oh, you can get them to us quickly. We --

MS. BOSTON: -- and having a structure in place to balance and deal with monitoring our risks, as you can imagine, and so one of the ways we're looking at that, not just for the weatherization money but for all of the ARRA that we're administering, is that we are trying to limit the number of contracts that we are entering into directly. So in this case we believe that it's most expeditious to enter into several contracts in the Houston area -- Sheltering Arms and then with the City, as opposed to entering into 15 or 20 because then that's 15 or 20 organizations that have to separately be trained and --

MS. HOUSE: Well, what about the CDC Association of Greater Houston? What if it could be the entity to distribute on monetary fee grass-

roots organizations doing the project? So it could be like one grass-roots entity that would oversee the grass-roots organizations receiving the funding. Is that a possibility?

MS. BOSTON: We can think about that and count that as we evaluate all the public input but we definitely can't answer what we would or wouldn't be able to do right now.

MS. HOUSE: Okay. So I do I submit my position paper to you all now or leave it?

MS. BOSTON: Sure. If you have a position paper, that'd be great.

MS. HOUSE: Okay.

MS. BOSTON: We'd love to read that.

MR. CAMPBELL: Absolutely.

MS. HOUSE: All right. Appreciate it.

MR. CAMPBELL: Thank you. Thank you very much.

Lynn Cook, also from Sheltering Arms. I don't know if you want to also speak. No?

MS. COOK: No.

MR. CAMPBELL: Okay. And Stephen Lobo from Nueces City.

MR. LOBO: Yes. And I'm here representing Nueces County Community Action Agency --

MR. CAMPBELL: County, sorry.

MR. LOBO: -- based in Corpus Christi. A couple of questions, you've talked in terms of it being 327 million. If that's -- my understanding is

correct, your paperwork shows it's 300- -- pretty close to 330. So that 1 percent variance, if you could comment on that.

MS. OEHLER: The allocation is 326.9.

MR. LOBO: So what you have here is 329.975. Is that accurate?

MS. OEHLER: That's correct.

MR. LOBO. Okay. If you would consider, is the DOE cap of 5 percent for TDHCA and then 5 percent for subrecipients hard caps, and if not, the 3 percent that you're saying would go to Direct Services, can that be funneled as administration to the subrecipients. That's one.

And similarly, for your training dollars, you talk of 17 percent being -- yes 17 percent is the allocation. If you would consider using the additional 7 percent to train at the subrecipient level, and obviously, because of the multiples that you spoke of, 55 X is a substantial step up from what we've been doing down in the Corpus Christi area for tens of decades. So -- I'm sorry, tens of years. So if you would consider that -- if you do have the latitude to allow for those dollars to be used.

MS. OEHLER: Okay. With respect to the administrative caps, those are actually put in place by the U.S. Department of Energy and so TDHCA can only spend up to 5 percent on administration and the same is true for the subrecipients.

MR. LOBO: So no latitude there.

MS. OEHLER: That's correct. Although we've made a decision to only retain 2 percent. And so the 3 percent we're passing on -- we passing

on the total amount to the subrecipients and so then the 5 percent comes off the top of that. So in effect we're putting more money --

MR. LOBO: Into the --

MS. OEHLER: -- into the local areas and only retaining 2 percent at the state level. And then the training and technical assistance funds, we're proposing 10 percent, but that 10 percent will be shared between TDHCA and the subrecipients. We haven't determined how we'll break that 10 percent out.

MR. LOBO: So why --

MS. OEHLER: The 17 percent just seemed excessive and so we're passing on the 7 percent to the statewide total amount of funds.

MR. LOBO: Okay. Well, thank you.

MR. CAMPBELL: Thank you. And I do want to underscore something Brooke mentioned. If you do have some comments and thoughts in writing, please feel free to submit those as well. We absolutely welcome them.

The next individual who's indicated they wanted to speak on weatherization is Bob Lawrence.

(Pause.)

MR. CAMPBELL: You're just here and -- okay, great.

Chad Sidford?

MR. SIDFORD: No comments.

MR. CAMPBELL: No comments? Okay.

Laura Hipps? Okay. Welcome.

MS. HIPPS: Good morning. Thank you so much. I'm Laura Hipps representing New Hope Housing. I just had one question, and I know this is a public comment session so if you're not able to answer it I understand. I wanted to know whether or not these funds could be used for existing SRO units where owners pay the utilities for the renters.

MS. OEHLER: Yes. The funds are available. As long as the members of the household meet the income criteria -- that's really the standard eligibility criteria is that the income of that family that's currently living in that unit, whether it's -- whether a homeowner or a renter, then that unit is eligible.

MS. HIPPS: Okay. And the recipient would be the organization not the individual because -- in the case of New Hope Housing it isn't the individual who pays the utilities.

MS. OEHLER: Actually DOE does specify the benefit -- it's supposed to benefit the people living in the unit and not the owners of the property.

MS. HIPPS: Okay. Thank you. That's all I have.

MR. CAMPBELL: Great. Thank you.

MS. HIPPS: Thank you very much.

MR. CAMPBELL: You're welcome.

Jimmy Smith?

MR. SMITH: Just signed in.

MR. CAMPBELL: Okay. Thank you. It is a little confusing. And I'm going to mess this name up.

Shinethik [phonetic] McDonald? Shinethea?

MS. McDONALD: I don't.

MR. CAMPBELL: No? Okay. There's also someone from PHS -- Kyla [phonetic]. You wish to speak? No? Okay.

That's it for the list I have. Is there anyone else who -- yes, please, come up and state your name and the organization you're representing.

MR. CONKLIN: Good morning and welcome to Houston, Texas --

MR. CAMPBELL: Thank you.

MS. OEHLER: Thank you.

MR. CONKLIN: -- the fourth largest metropolitan area in the United States, including when we think of Harris County, et cetera. And I'm here speaking as an executive director of private sector -- excuse me -- of Rebuilding Together Houston.

MR. CAMPBELL: And your name?

MR. CONKLIN: I'm executive director and my name is Robert Conklin.

MR. CAMPBELL: Welcome.

MR. CONKLIN: And my co-chairman of the board, Randy Henry, is here as well. I want to endorse the avenue you're on so far which is allocating funds to Sheltering Arms and the City of Houston. They have the ability to handle more money and to handle it very wisely. I want to point out to you that there are very efficient ways to use what I'm proud to say are

taxpayer dollars.

And when we think of what I'll call the hierarchy of need, how to spend those dollars on these houses, and does the hierarchy of need in Texas -- is it the same in Amarillo as it is in McAllen? You don't have to answer that but I ask you to think about it. In Houston, Rebuilding Together Houston does not speak in terms of weatherization.

I grew up in New York state where I know what weather is. We speak in terms of energy efficiency, reducing the consumption of kilowatt hours. And we've had the privilege of using over \$5 million in the last three years to do energy-efficient modifications in over 3,000 houses. And the reduction in kilowatt-hour consumption is 20 percent and higher, comparing after spending the money what a comparable month, et cetera, before spending the money.

And I would ask you to please considering whether insulating the walls of houses in Houston is a wise use of money. I'd ask you to desperately consider whether changing out showerheads is a wise use of money. Houses in Houston that desperately need this have cast iron piping, cast iron piping that's been there for 50 years, and when you back a showerhead off that, you quite often break the pipe behind the sheet rock or behind the shower enclosure.

I hear that there's a 5 percent administrative fee. I doubt that my board of directors would ever permit Rebuilding Together Houston to accept designated money with a 5 percent administrative fee. It's a good way to sink an organization unless you're going to do some kind of accounting to

somehow put enough money in the cash register to operate an efficient program. I please ask you to hear that.

We get 16 percent to 20 percent administrative fee and we essentially break even and we do 5- to \$6 million a year of house repairs and modifications serving 1,200 to 1,700 addresses a year in the City of Houston. And we serve them with five programs that interconnect, synergize each other. We hire contractors for roofs; we hire contractors for interior systems; we hire contractors to do energy-efficiency modifications. We hire contractors and use volunteers to make a house safer as an elderly person starts to lose their ability to balance, their ability to get in and out of a bathtub.

Very simply, when an elderly person falls and breaks her hip the quality of her life descends. We keep our clientele in their home, safe, warm and dry, for as long as possible, preserving affordable home ownership. We take no United Way money; we take no federal money. It can be done very wisely and very efficiently. I inadvertently started out saying "private sector initiatives." That's the name of the company twelve years ago when I came here and that's the discipline we use.

I'd ask you to think about this hierarchy of need so that you don't have people who had hired contractors to do things and the things are not that productive as far as reducing kilowatt-hour consumption. There are statistics out there that can tell you attic insulation is important. Windows are important from the standpoint of a person's safety. When we go into a house and in the bedroom where this widow lives who's 65 or 70 years old and that window is painted shut, that is a safety hazard. If there's a fire in the living

room, how does she get out of her bedroom if she can't get the window open?

Think in terms of a broader context as far as how you're spending taxpayer money. Make the house safer and enhance the efficiency of energy. We talk about carbon footprints and all the rest of this stuff. I'm not sure what the benefit is of weatherstripping a door one year later because the weatherstripping has probably fallen off. But replacing the door itself is meaningful. Yes, it costs more, but it's meaningful. Windows, doors, attic insulation -- being efficient in how you seal the envelope to make the house conserve heating in the wintertime, conserve cooling in the summertime.

So I just offer that to you under this weatherization. I haven't heard the other part of this -- the other shoe that you have here which is about homelessness. I'm interested in hearing what homelessness has to do with that. Thank you very much.

MR. CAMPBELL: Thank you very much.

Yes, sir. If you'd like to come up and state your name and your organization you're representing.

MR. LOGAN: Hi. My name is Mike Logan. I'm with Managed Energy Services. I was listening to this gentleman speak. Question for you? How many of you use Velcro for anything? Just lift your hand. Okay.

Where did that come from? Space program. Okay. Where we're at is we're trying to weatherize today using technologies that are outdated. I heard the gentleman mention insulation. He's correct. But insulation only slows the advance of heat into a building and slows the

advance of the heat out of the building. So it's not really an efficiency issue when there are solutions like radiant barriers that are based on the same ceramic that's on the space shuttle that prevents it from becoming toast when it comes into the atmosphere.

There are other solutions, such as -- I heard him mention windows. Here we're in an area where we have hurricanes and right here in Houston is the son of a man who invented the covering for the Stealth bomber and the Stealth fighter. And this material allows all of the lumens to come in but prevents most of the radiant energy from entering the building. And it's clear, and it's a window treatment that can be used both commercially and residentially.

And we did a lot of work in demand side management for manufacturers, processors, industrial work. And one of the things that we found is very often most -- almost everybody in this room pays 5 percent of their electric bill for electricity that they never use. It's called spiking. Everybody has a spike that -- when your refrigerator turns off and on; your fuel pump turns off and on. When -- any cycling motor -- your air conditioning turns off and on, there's a spike.

The meter doesn't catch that. The electricity company's smart enough to program the meters to catch it but, obviously, it's to their interest not to. There's a solution which we used in nine Goodyear plants that we did called an inline capacitor between the meter and the breaker box.

One of the other problems that we have here in Houston is the heat that collects in the crawl space. There's a very simple cost-effective

solution to that. It's called a solar-powered attic vent fan, which if you have soffits or vents in your roof, allows you to keep the temperature in the attic or crawl space ambient to the outside, which means that you have less heat trying to get into the building.

So my challenge to you today is that we don't do the same stupid things that we've always been doing, that we use the meaningful things that we've done but that we look to the expansion of technology. It's something that my company works on extensively. We're involved in utility-grade projects making hydrogen out of water, which is something the United States Navy has done for 40 years.

A lot of the technologies that you would use have simply been updated and upgraded and I would suggest that before monies are spent that you look at the variety of technologies that are out there today that can solve problems, that can weatherize a home where you're basically taking the building envelope and preventing the infrared from coming in -- 96, 95 percent of the infrared from coming in during the summer and from leaving during the winter, which reduces the KWH consumer, which reduces the natural gas consumption, which allows us to have more sustainable homes.

Other than that, you guys have a big job on your hands. Good luck.

MR. CAMPBELL: Thank you very much. I appreciate your input.

Is there anyone else who would like to provide input on weatherization -- Weatherization program? If not, we're going to close that

segment and move on to homelessness, so one last call.

Yes, sir. Come up. Going once, going twice --

Yes. Yes, sir.

VOICE: Which one?

MR. CAMPBELL: You. That gentleman, I believe --

VOICE: You said you were going. I thought you meant going up --

MR. SMITH: Jimmy Smith with Pro Energy Solutions. Thank you, Mr. Logan, for bringing that up. We have been one of the preeminent energy efficiency companies in the Houston area. When we formed ourselves five years ago we helped in the actual -- the legislation of the energy package for the State of Texas. Our company helped with that in getting it passed for the State of Texas so that people had a standard for which to build their home.

There are several things that are out there that are inefficient. There are companies that are doing things incorrectly. I think Mr. Logan and I have the same desire which is to make sure that things are done properly. Now, one of the things that I wanted to come for is because this is going through a public sector and it goes to subrecipients. I'm a contractor; that's what I do. I'm a registered homebuilder with the State of Texas. I'm also a certified rebuilder and licensed through the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs.

One of the things that is so often done is, as Mr. Logan expressed, we tend to do things the way we've done them before as Mr. Conklin expressed. I think that correctly pronounced his name. There are

things -- going by and putting the vinyl and the Styrofoam on the doors, a year from now they're not there. There's a better application to do.

And we try to do those things because air infiltration, the correct balance of moisture within the home, the education of people as to how much moisture can build up in a home, are all just as critical to the weatherization as the weatherization itself.

For instance, I think according to the state records, a family of five will contribute -- if they don't use their exhaust fans when they're cooking; if they don't use the fans in their showers and rooms -- a family of five can add over eight pounds of water per month to their house. Well, guess what? That's going to lead to mildew problems, and also because we're creatures of comfort that in the Houston area depend on the transfer of energy between our skin and the air, if the humidity is too high in the house the people are going to be uncomfortable. And for an aged person that is even more critical.

So it's the whole process of weatherization that needs to be developed. I forgot to list Pro Energy Solutions when I signed in. I would like to correct that as well because I put the name that we're licensed under TDHCA there. But Pro Energy Solutions is a registered building and it's just as critical. So when we're addressing these things we need to look at the whole application, use those people that care about doing the process correctly, and then take into consideration what we're trying to accomplish, with, I think, the \$6,500 per household that you've allocated to be spent.

And when you're looking at spending -- even if it is 3.6 -- three hundred and point 6 million dollars. That is still a significant amount and that's

a lot of households when you look at it over a \$6,500 allocation. And so I'd be glad to participate any way that I can. Thank you for this opportunity.

MR. CAMPBELL: And thank you very much. Appreciate it.

Sir?

MR. WEISFELD: Thank y'all for being here today. My name is Sheldon Weisfeld and I'm honored to represent U.S. Weatherization. We're a minority, woman-owned business, and I think some of you may have had an opportunity to meet some of our representatives in Austin last week.

But what I want to bring to everybody's attention is the fact and the need -- I think Mr. Conklin and Mr. Smith and Mr. Logan are very keen on this in my listening is that there needs to be some organized training, being able to take the resources that are available to us with the advances in technology and being able to apply those to these subrecipients in a fashion that represents a more efficient and effective use of our proceeds that are available, our tax dollars.

We've got a massive amount of funding that's available. You have an incredible burden at your hands in effectively and efficiently deploying this money. And for these funds to go down similar paths that they've gone down before utilizing them in what may be deemed "inefficient deficiency" or weatherization -- I think there's a lot of other solutions out there.

And by creating a centralized training program, which is what U.S. Weatherization's intention is, creates a standard by which we know that these funds are going to be applied for the benefits of jobs, security, energy efficiency, because jobs is part of our initiative as well as reducing our demand

on energy. And I think that these issues are very relevant and we look forward to the opportunity of discussing this with y'all further and determining how we can create a synergistic solution to a standardized training program. Thank you.

MR. CAMPBELL: Thank you very much.

Would anyone else like to speak on weatherization?

(No response.)

MR. CAMPBELL: Okay. If not, I'm going to move on and I think in case there's a mass exodus, I do want to thank everyone for coming and sharing your thoughts with us. We absolutely will take everything that's stated seriously and consider everything everyone's said.

With that, I do want to introduce the next topic which is the Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program. This is program funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. It's administered by HUD. There was \$1.5 billion in the Stimulus bill which is being distributed to -- I believe it's about 504 entities, including state organizations and entitlement entities which include cities and counties.

In Texas, the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs is receiving just over \$41 million; eligible entitlement entities around the state are receiving about 62 million. So what we wanted to do today was just kind of give you a brief introduction to the program and then, again, receive your thoughts. The program has been compared to the Emergency Shelter Block Program but HUD has made every effort to indicate that this program is not the Emergency Shelter Grant Program.

The Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program is dedicated and targeted to two general activities and that is homelessness prevention and rapid re-housing of individuals who are homeless. Just to make sure -- those of you that are familiar with the ESG program, there are some significant differences.

This program cannot fund construction or rehabilitation of shelters and it cannot fund operating and maintenance costs of shelters. It can fund financial assistance which includes short-term rental assistance from zero to three months, and it can fund up to -- between four and 18 months of medium-term rental assistance. It can also fund security and utility deposits, utility payments, moving cost assistance, motel and hotel vouchers and habitability inspections. It can also fund case management; it can fund outreach and engagement, housing search and placement, legal services and credit repair.

A couple of those things are also different from the ESG program. It funds, as an allowable activity, data collection and evaluation, and there will be an administrative cap of 5 percent. And that is actually a shared cap so the total fund for administrative costs are 5 percent of the grant from the Department of Housing and Urban Development and that must be shared between TDHCA and subgrantees.

On the second sheet of the handout it lists eligible households, those who are at risk of homelessness, those that are currently in housing but are at risk of becoming homeless and need temporary rent or utility assistance to prevent them from becoming homeless, or those who are already

homeless, residing in emergency or transitional shelters or who are on the street and need temporary assistance in order to obtain housing and retain housing.

There are some ineligible activities listed there. Those include mortgage payments, construction rehab, credit card bills, car repairs, transportation costs, travel costs, et cetera. So those are listed in Number 6.

We have on the back page a draft allocation formula. It's broken down into 13 regions and what we did is explained in the paragraph beneath those numbers, but just to quickly summarize, we looked at the 13 uniform regions that we use for other distribution and looked at current poverty levels and current employment levels and weighted those 50/50 and then distributed -- the draft allocation is based on that formula.

So at this point we would like to open it up to input from you all, and what I'll do is I'll go back and go down the list like I did before of those who have checked an interest in speaking on this topic. And if you'd like come up and just state your name and you organization.

Gladys House, would you like to speak again?

MS. HOUSE: Yes, I most certainly would.

MR. CAMPBELL: Great. Welcome.

MS. HOUSE: Gladys House. And, again, I'm with the Historic Freedman's Town Community, the CDC of Freedman's Town, the Black Contractors and Business Owners and Affordable Carpets, LLC d/b/a Carpet Depot. Just have a couple of questions although you answered the first couple of ones.

Who will selected the clients and who will conduct the housing inspections as well as must we go through the city to receive the funds too? Here, again, I'm going back to the initial concerns. If we can receive the funding directly without going through the city or the county or any other subrecipients --

MR. CAMPBELL: Sure. This is actually a competitive grant that -- the 41 million that we have control over does not go directly to the city. These go -- there's a notice of funding availability that will be open to any nonprofit organization or local unit of government to apply for.

MS. HOUSE: Okay. So it's for nonprofit, not for profits that -- they're ineligible.

MR. CAMPBELL: Correct.

MS. HOUSE: Okay.

MR. CAMPBELL: Correct. And as for who determines eligibility, within the HUD guidelines it does have certain guidelines of eligibility, those who are eligible, but the subrecipients are going to need to prioritize and make those decisions internally. We'll receive those during the review of the applications just to make sure that there's nothing untoward on there, but we will leave that up to the subgrantees to some extent.

MS. HOUSE: Okay. But that NOFA is coming out later --

MR. CAMPBELL: The NOFA will -- the timeline right now is that it will be out at the latest at the end of May.

MS. HOUSE: Okay.

MR. CAMPBELL: We hope to have a draft sooner than that.

MS. HOUSE: Okay. So that's why you're getting input now -- right? -- so that you --

MR. CAMPBELL: Pardon me?

MS. HOUSE: That's why you're getting input from the public.

MR. CAMPBELL: Exactly. Absolutely.

MS. HOUSE: Okay. All right. That completes my questioning for right now. Thank you.

MR. CAMPBELL: Great. Thank you.

Oh, and we do want to make a point that once we do release the NOFA we will be having workshops to help folks understand the NOFA and the application process.

The next individual is Stephen Lobo from Nueces County. Just -- okay. Just making your presence known. Thank you.

And I apologize -- Michele Powell.

MS. POWELL: I was just signing in.

MR. CAMPBELL: Okay. You're just signing in. Great.

Welcome.

Valerie Ellis?

(No audible response.)

MR. CAMPBELL: Just -- okay. Great.

Georgia Kimmo [phonetic]? Would you like -- okay. That's all I have. Would anyone like to speak on the Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program?

(No response.)

MR. CAMPBELL: Okay. Great. Well, I want to make sure that

--

Yes, sir. Come up and state your name and who you're representing.

MR. HOM: Good morning. My name is Samuel Hom [phonetic] with Mental Health Mental Retardation Authority of Harris County and I was looking at the information that y'all had for the meeting y'all had in Austin. And one of the ineligible activities listed was mental health services or mental health treatment and also substance abuse. I didn't know if that was something that was fast -- you know, set or if that's changeable or anything of that nature.

MR. CAMPBELL: That is actually set by the Department of Housing and Urban Development and, I believe, the statute.

MR. HOM: Okay.

MR. CAMPBELL: It's actual law unfortunately. We -- there are -- and this applies to the weatherization as well, the federal agency that administers the funds develops rules that we must abide by and we have some flexibility on things that they tell us we have flexibility on. Other things we have no flexibility on and this is one of them.

MR. HOM: Okay. I just wanted to check. I haven't had a chance to look on the regs yet but --

MR. CAMPBELL: Well, one thing though that I do want to make clear is that the Department of Housing and Urban and Development does strongly encourage the coordination of benefits. So the case manager

cannot provide direct service based on mental health and substance abuse but they can refer that individual and they are strongly -- as we are, strongly encouraging close collaboration in working together.

MR. HOM: That's correct. Just that our case managers, they do a combination of things including some of those services.

MR. CAMPBELL: Sure.

MR. HOM: So we want to make sure we're clear on what roles we're able to provide and not provide.

MR. CAMPBELL: Excellent.

MR. HOM: Great. Thank you.

MR. CAMPBELL: Thank you.

Okay. Anyone else who'd like to speak on the homelessness funds?

(No response.)

MR. CAMPBELL: We're going to then close that section and turn it back over to Amy for the Community Services Block Grant.

MS. OEHLER: Okay. Thank you. The Community Services Block Grant is administered a federal level by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. And we have received word that Texas can expect approximately \$48 million for this particular program. Unfortunately, we haven't received any grant guidance or even the final allocation number. And as soon as we do have that information, we'll certainly make that public.

But we just wanted to touch on it today. Typically, the state receives about \$31 million for the Community Services Block Grant and, by

federal law, these programs, or this funding, goes to entities that have been designated by the Governor. And so there are 48 nonprofits throughout the state that serve all 254 counties that receive this funding.

And the purpose of it is to help transition families out of poverty. And there are several different allowable activities within this program. Typically these funds are used to provide administrative support to low-income programs that are operated by these local nonprofits, most of which are -- some of them help augment the programs the Department funds, but in addition to that, there are other programs such as Meals on Wheels and transportation programs and health programs.

And so it's one of the only federal grants that allows for you to take those funds and to use it for administrative purposes. But in addition to that, at the Department we also encourage the subrecipients to use as much funding as possible to help transition individuals and families out of poverty.

Is there anyone that would like to speak about the Community Services Block Grant?

MR. CAMPBELL: Gladys, I believe you have --
Gladys House.

MS. HOUSE: Gladys House, and I'm here on behalf of Historic Freedman's Town Community, the CDC of Freedman's Town, the Black Contractors and Business Owners Association and Affordable Carpets, LLC d/b/a Carpet Depot.

I have a few questions. Although you stated that the funds may be used for administrative purposes, here again we're also talking about

training but no construction use. Correct? It's just -- or am I --

MS. OEHLER: I'm sorry. Did you say construction?

MS. HOUSE: Right.

MS. OEHLER: Right. These funds cannot be used for construction.

MS. HOUSE: Okay. So there's no funding under the CDBG program that allows for construction of a youth facility.

MS. OEHLER: And actually, this is the Community Services Block Grant.

MS. HOUSE: Uh-huh.

MS. OEHLER: The Community Development Block Grant is a separate grant.

MS. HOUSE: Okay. So basically for the training and development of low-income families and children could be applied for under this program.

MS. OEHLER: Correct. The low-income families go to their local subrecipient -- and most of the 48 organizations we work with also have satellite offices in addition to their main office. And there are case managers who help basically assess the family's individual situation and they work with them over a period of time to help transition them out of poverty. And that could mean something different for every family.

MS. HOUSE: Okay.

MS. OEHLER: In some instances it's linking them up with education. In some instances it's helping them find some sort of temporary

assistance until they're able to get back on their feet again.

MS. HOUSE: Well, again, I'm concerned that all of these agencies in the Houston area that you mentioned, they still don't seem to provide the services into Freedman's Town and other distressed African American communities. And I'd like to submit the position paper to request that your agency begins to rethink as the gentleman -- I think it was Mr. Logan spoke earlier -- that you can't continue to apply conventional means to unconventional situations and expect to have productive, tangible results.

So I'd like to enter my position paper on this because the way it's set up now the program is ineffective in terms of getting the services into the communities, the targeted communities, for the targeted participants. So I will go ahead and just forward that to you.

MR. CAMPBELL: Great. Thank you very much.

MS. HOUSE: Thank you very much.

MR. CAMPBELL: Thank you.

Tom Van Dyke.

VOICE: No. No comments.

MR. CAMPBELL: No? Okay.

Stephen Lobo?

MR. LOBO: Well, again, representing Nueces County Community Action Agency and we do receive CSBG grants. So thank you for that. And question -- in relation to training and capacity building of the disadvantaged who we are attempting to serve -- if programs like homebuyer education, foreclosure prevention, teaching or attempting to convey the

rudiments of daily economics to that population, is the cost of that covered by CSBG?

MS. OEHLER: I'm sorry. Can you state the question one more time to make sure I understand.

MR. LOBO: Not a problem. As we attempt to serve these populations --

MS. OEHLER: Okay.

MR. LOBO: -- the underserved with programs like homebuyer education, foreclosure prevention -- just the rudiments of daily economics, pretty much like an FDIC kind of Smart program. So these are approved curriculum. Does CSBG allow for the training costs of these programs --

MS. OEHLER: Okay.

MR. LOBO: -- so the handouts to these families that attend.

MS. OEHLER: Sure. I guess the one piece that you would want to verify is that the participants are income-eligible.

MR. LOBB: Oh, that's a given.

MS. OEHLER: That's the one piece. Okay. All right. Well, then, in that case it does seem like something that CSBG would allow.

MR. HOBB: So how do we go about getting clarification on that in writing?

MS. OEHLER: Okay. Well, what you need to do is to submit an amendment to your community action plan. You know how each year you submit a community action plan along with the budget --

MR. HOBB: Uh-huh.

MS. OEHLER: -- to our office. And so if you'd like to amend that, and that's something that we will approve in writing and send back to you.

MR. HOBBS; Thank you very much.

MR. CAMPBELL: Thank you. There's one other individual who's indicated a desire to speak.

Jimmy Smith? He may have left.

(No response.)

MR. CAMPBELL: Okay. Is there anyone else who would like to make a comment? Please come up to the microphone and state your name and the organization you're representing.

MS. SAUER: Hi. I'm Sharon Sauer. I'm representing Sustaining Nonprofits. And I just want to thank you guys for allowing me to come up here and speak.

Past three or four months I've been doing extensive research on resident services. I just wanted to come in and kind of educate you guys on the benefits that resident services do provide in affordable housing for long-term sustainability for the residents, the property and the community at large. It's actually one of the services that can give you a triple return on your investment.

There's been a study show that the affordable housing units that do have resident services on there, they have a 300 percent chance of lower vacancy rates. Their bad debt and collections improve. Just in terms of business sense I think that resident services make sense on affordable housing properties. There seems to be a lot of different ways to get that

funded. You know, some of them are written above the line, some below the line. Some we have to go out and fund raise.

And I just think as you move forward and you start to talk about Community Services Block Grants, prevention of homelessness -- when you talk about getting out of poverty. These are the types of services that resident services really do provide on a one-to-one individual level.

I've been working with a local agency here. They have over 22,000 units and they have given their resident services coordinators the flexibility to actually adjust to their audience so that they provide a wide array of services at a very low cost and the benefit is tremendous. And I just think that sometimes when you talk about case management and social services to allow your thought-process to include this resident services because you're actually there on the property; you have a captive audience.

It's not like they have to come to you; you go to them. You can establish relationships with their children by -- and they do after-school programming which then leads into resume writing which could lead into buying their first home. And all of those are provided by one person. So I just think if you're going to talk about the most bang for your buck you really do need to consider resident services. Thanks.

MR. CAMPBELL: Thank you very much.

Yes, sir?

MR. CAMPBELL: Just state your name and your organization.

MR. WALLACE: Yes, sir. Good morning. My name is Jeff Wallace. I am with Gulf Coast Community Services Association. Just three

things that I wanted to express. Number one, I wanted to publicly thank Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs as well as the current administration for making these funds available. They are essential. I can tell you right now that our services are really being taxed based on the people that are in need. So I do believe that these services will be very beneficial.

Secondly, I also want to encourage that we are able to raise the income threshold to 200 percent. We are coming across a significant number of families in which they are just over that 125 percent threshold by \$1,500, et cetera. And I definitely feel that that is something that is a need.

Thirdly, I also just wanted to express that Gulf Coast Community Services Association is the designated community action agency for Harris County. We are a recipient of funds from TDHCA as well as funds for housing counseling through a Neighborhood Works grant. And I also want to extend myself to the people that are here. I will be here after this public hearing to discuss opportunities to leverage resources so that we may be able to attack these problems collectively. Thanks.

MR. CAMPBELL: Great. Thank you.

Is there anyone else who'd like to speak on the Community Services Block Grant?

(No response.)

MR. CAMPBELL: Great. Well, if not, then that will conclude our public input. I would like to, once again, extend the appreciation of the Department to all of you for coming down today. We greatly value your input and we will be taking everything that you share with us and be considering it.

And unless there's any other thoughts, thank you and have a wonderful day.

(Whereupon, at 11:18 a.m., the public hearing was concluded.)

CERTIFICATE

IN RE: TDHCA Recovery and Reinvestment Act
Public Hearing
LOCATION: Houston, Texas
DATE: April 6, 2009

I do hereby certify that the foregoing pages, numbers 1 through 48, inclusive, are the true, accurate, and complete transcript prepared from the verbal recording made by electronic recording by Leslie Berridge before the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs.

4/09/2009
(Transcriber) (Date)

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