

February 2011

The Honorable Kent Conrad  
United States Senate  
530 Hart Building  
Washington, DC 20510 - 3404

Dear Senator Conrad,

Elected officials everywhere understand budgetary concerns and the need for belt-tightening in the current economic climate. We also recognize the need to carefully evaluate programs' value and the dollars they leverage to ensure cuts are made judiciously, and without unintended consequences.

The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program warrants that kind of careful consideration. While it is a big-budget national entitlement program, it allows great flexibility to local decision-makers, and has made tremendous contributions throughout the great State of North Dakota. Rural communities are served by a State CDBG program administered by the ND Department of Commerce; the "Big Three" communities receive funds directly.


Bismarck's CDBG program has partnered with local organizations to impact many lives. CDBG funds have been used to improve housing and public facilities, provide operational support for local agencies, and increase accessibility throughout the City. Assisted activities have been as far-ranging as a dental clinic to serve low-income clients, a Backpack for Kids program to provide food for homeless children, and replacing a boiler at the Senior Center.

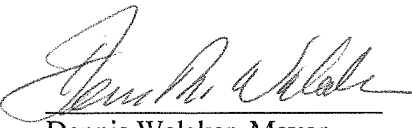
In Fargo, CDBG funding is a vital component of the City's work to address a variety of housing and community development needs. Fargo has successfully used CDBG funding as an incentive to invest in housing infrastructure, downtown revitalization, economic development, and neighborhood revitalization. In most instances, CDBG assistance leverages private sector funding -- generally, every \$1 of Fargo's CDBG funding is matched by over \$4.50 in local and other sources of funds.


Grand Forks was the recipient of CDBG disaster recovery assistance after the 1997 flood. That \$171 million was instrumental in meeting the community's urgent need, getting citizens out of the mud and back on their feet. City leaders' wise use of CDBG disaster assistance is still paying dividends today: in loan programs that continue to revolve those funds; in a revitalized downtown that is has become one of Grand Forks' most desirable addresses; in ongoing efforts to preserve and create affordable housing. Over the past five years, this program has leveraged nearly \$33 million in private investment in Grand Forks alone.

This is just a snapshot of what CDBG can do. The CDBG program has a demonstrable record of success and warrants continued funding. We firmly support it, and urge you to do the same.

Sincerely,

  
John Warford, Mayor  
City of Bismarck, ND

  
Dennis Walaker, Mayor  
City of Fargo, ND

  
Michael R. Brown, Mayor  
City of Grand Forks, ND

February 2011

The Honorable John Hoeven  
United States Senate  
G11 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Hoeven,

Elected officials everywhere understand budgetary concerns and the need for belt-tightening in the current economic climate. We also recognize the need to carefully evaluate programs' value and the dollars they leverage to ensure cuts are made judiciously, and without unintended consequences.

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February 2011

The Honorable Rick Berg  
United States House of Representatives  
323 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Berg,

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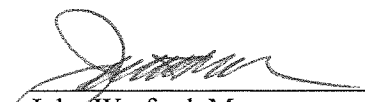
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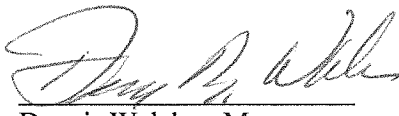
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