



May 21, 2003

Mr. Steve Redburn
Chief, Housing Branch
The Office of Management and Budget
725 17th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Mr. Redburn:

We are aware that as part of the preparation for the FY2005 budget process, the Office of Management and Budget will review the performance of 20% of federal programs utilizing the Program Assessment Rating Tool (PART). As you know, our members access a number of these federally funded programs, and we are interested in finding out if any programs that are utilized by our members are scheduled to undergo a review. In particular, we would like to know if the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program administered by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development will be assessed.

Given the active role of our members in administering and implementing the CDBG program, we believe the development and use of performance measures to assess the program is a process in which we could serve as a crucial resource. One of the key strengths of CDBG as a block grant program is its flexibility. This flexibility provides states and communities the opportunity to use the funds for a wide range of activities to meet both their local development needs and the national objectives of the program. This same flexibility would create unanticipated challenges in developing measures to assess this program on a national basis. As a result, we are concerned that the indicators identified in any review accurately reflect the intent and design of the program, and are extremely interested in being part of any process related to the creation of such indicators or measures.

Since the FY2005 budget process will start soon, we are eager to initiate a dialogue with your office on this issue, and believe an assessment based on relevant indicators can serve an important purpose for the Administration, HUD and our members. We would also like to initiate a dialogue with you regarding the re-assessment of the HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME) program in FY2005 and the indicators and measures that best reflect that program's performance.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. We look forward to hearing from you and would like to meet with you at your earliest convenience. Please coordinate this meeting with Dionne Roberts, 202.289.3500. We look forward to working with you in this endeavor or any other in which our organizations can be of assistance to your office.

Cordially yours,

Council of State Community Development Agencies
National Association for County Community and Economic Development
National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials
National Community Development Association

Cc: The Honorable Roy Bernardi
Assistant Secretary for Community Planning and Development,
Department of Housing and Urban Development
451 7th St., S.W., Room 7202
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