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Christie Administration Rolls Out Proposed Plans for Third Round of Federal Sandy Recovery Funds Allocated to New Jersey by HUD

Tuesday, December 16, 2014

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Details How State Will Complete RREM Program, Expand LMI Rental Programs

Trenton, NJ – The Christie Administration today announced that it is proposing to spend \$501.9 million in federal disaster recovery funds to include completing repairs on all eligible Sandy-damaged homes remaining in the Reconstruction, Rehabilitation, Elevation and Mitigation (RREM) Program and to expand the Fund for the Restoration of Multi-Family Housing (FRM) Program, which finances thousands of affordable rental units for low- to moderate-income (LMI) families. Additional funds will be allocated to the Sandy Special Needs Housing Fund and for tenant-based rental assistance.

The Administration unveiled its Amendments to the New Jersey Disaster Recovery Action Plan proposing how the state will spend the third and most likely final round of federal Post-Sandy Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) funds the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) is allocating to New Jersey.

"These additional disaster recovery funds will allow the State, working closely with all of our partners, to continue this process of repairing and replacing housing damaged by the worst natural disaster in our state's history," said Governor Chris Christie. "We thank HUD for allocating these funds to New Jersey, and for its continued partnership in rebuilding New Jersey better and stronger after Sandy."

The proposed funding allocation to existing recovery programs is:

- \$225 million will finance the repairs and mitigation measures for households on the RREM Program waitlist.
- \$215 million will expand the FRM Program, which is administered by the New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency (HMFA) and finances the repair or replacement of rental housing units damaged or destroyed by Superstorm Sandy.
- \$10 million to the Sandy Special Needs Housing Fund (SSNHF) Program, which is administered by HMFA and repairs or replaces housing for special needs populations damaged or destroyed by Superstorm Sandy.
- \$15 million to provide assistance for up to two years through the Tenant-Based Rental Assistance (TBRA) Program to be launched in January. The funds, which are in addition to the \$17 million in second round CDBG-DR funds allocated to this program, will increase availability of rental units to LMI households and revitalize impacted communities.

Like past CDBG-DR allocations, remaining funds will be dedicated for costs associated with administering recovery programs. Additionally, as with previous CDBG-DR allocations, HUD mandates that at least 80 percent of CDBG-DR funds be spent within the nine most-impacted counties as determined by HUD (Atlantic, Bergen, Cape May, Essex,

Hudson, Middlesex, Monmouth, Ocean and Union Counties). Additionally, at least 50 percent of all CDBG-DR funding allocated to New Jersey for disaster recovery must be expended to benefit low- to moderate-income households, businesses and communities.

In addition to its proposal for allocating discretionary third round CDBG-DR funds across existing recovery programs, the State also has proposed a separate Action Plan Amendment describing the allocation of \$380 million of additional third round CDBG-DR funds that must be expended in connection with two projects selected by HUD through HUD's Rebuild by Design (RBD) initiative: one focused in the Hudson River region (allocated \$230 million by HUD) and the other in the Meadowlands region (allocated \$150 million by HUD). The RBD projects are described in detail in proposed Action Plan Amendment Number Twelve to New Jersey's CDBG-DR Action Plan.

Public Comment Period

The Administration opened a 30-day period for the public to comment on the proposed Action Plan Amendments it is making public today. The comment period will run from today, December 16, through January 15, 2015. The proposed Action Plan Amendments may be obtained in English and Spanish at <http://renewjerseystronger.org> and at <http://www.nj.gov/dca/divisions/sandyrecovery/action/> on the Department of Community Affairs' website. The Amendments also may be obtained by contacting Jaime Sauls at 609-633-1328; or by email to sandy.recovery@dca.nj.us.

Written comments on the proposed Action Plan Amendments will be accepted for the minimum of thirty (30) days from the date of posting. All comments must be received by 5:00pm (EST) on January 15, 2015 to be considered. Two public hearings will be held during the comment period on the following dates and at the following locations:

January 6, 2015: Ocean County College, Jay and Linda Grunin Center for the Performing Arts, 1 College Drive, Building 12, Toms River, New Jersey, 08754 (4-7 pm)

January 7, 2015: Bergen Community College, Moses Center, 400 Paramus Road, Paramus, New Jersey 07652 (4-7 pm)

Comments can be submitted at the hearings, via email to sandy.publiccomment@dca.state.nj.us and via U.S. mail to Jamie Sauls, Constituent Services Manager, Sandy Recovery Division, NJ Department of Community Affairs, 101 South Broad Street, Post Office Box 800, Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0800. All comments are given the same consideration regardless of the method of submission.

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