INDIANA FORECLOSURE PREVENTION NETWORK

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CONTACT
Emily Duncan, IHCDA
(317) 234-1745
eduncan@ihcda.in.gov

MEDIA ADVISORY

IHCDA and public officials to host fourth public forum to address Indiana's Abandoned Homes to be held December 4, 2013 at 6 p.m. in South Bend

What: Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority (IHCDA), which is overseen by Lieutenant Governor Sue Ellspermann, will host the fourth in a series of public forums to address blighted, vacant and abandoned homes in Indiana. The event will be held in conjunction with a group of bi-partisan elected officials including Mayor Peter Buttigieg, and State Senators Broden (D), Zakas (R) and Merritt (R).

When: Wednesday, December 4, 2013 at 6 p.m. EST

Where: St. Joseph County Public Library Main Branch- Colfax Auditorium, 304 S. Main Street, South Bend, IN 46601

Additional meetings will be held throughout the state in the coming months to ensure all Hoosier residents have the opportunity to provide feedback. If you are unable to attend the public hearings, please submit written comments to feedback@ihcda.in.gov by Tuesday, Dec. 31, 2013.

Background

Blighted, vacant and abandoned homes are a serious issue for Indiana homeowners, neighborhoods and communities. Sadly, the State of Indiana has the dubious distinction of having the highest percentage of abandoned foreclosed homes in the country. RealtyTrac and 24/7 Wall Street are reporting that roughly 30% of Indiana's foreclosed homes are abandoned. This means that due to foreclosure alone, 5,000 blighted and abandoned homes are negatively impacting Indiana homeowners and neighborhoods by reducing property values. Blighted properties also serve as a drain on municipal resources. Many Indiana communities lack the resources necessary to address this growing issue alone.

The U.S. Department of the Treasury established the Housing Finance Agency Innovation Fund for the Hardest-Hit Markets (Hardest Hit Fund) to provide financial assistance to families in the states most impacted by the downturn of the housing market. The U.S. Department of the Treasury designed the

overall program to give each participating state the flexibility to tailor its program to the unique factors contributing to its state's foreclosure problems. The Hardest Hit Fund is a national program available in 18 states and the District of Columbia.

Indiana was awarded more than $221 million under the Hardest Hit Fund and is targeting low- to moderate-income homeowners whose primary residence is in any county in Indiana. The State of Indiana, through IHCDA, is exploring the use of a portion of the Hardest Hit Funds to demolish blighted and abandoned homes that are beyond repair. The goal is not simply to demolish abandoned homes, but to stabilize property values in Indiana communities. The proposed partnership between IHCDA and Indiana municipalities would allow communities to demolish blighted properties and offer a variety of end uses for the newly cleared properties including green space and redevelopment. IHCDA, Lt. Governor Sue Ellspermann, IHCDA's Board Chair, Mayor Buttigieg and Senator Merritt believe that the demolition of abandoned and blighted homes would be a significant step toward rebuilding Hoosier communities.

Since IHCDA's announcement that it was exploring the use of Hardest Hit Funds to eliminate blighted and abandoned properties, many have expressed concern that doing so might detract from the mission of helping struggling homeowners avoid foreclosure. IHCDA would like to reassure the public that it is committed to using the majority of Hardest Hit Funds to help individual homeowners in need. As of September 30, 2013, more than 2,250 homeowners have received approximately $24 million in Hardest Hit Fund mortgage payment assistance; and another $49 million has been set aside to provide mortgage payment assistance to approved homeowners currently enrolled in the program.

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