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Report Calls for Improvements to Sandy Recovery Efforts

Analysis of data provided by State illustrates imbalanced distribution of funding

TRENTON – In a report released today, civil rights, housing and community advocates reviewed the challenges facing Sandy affected residents and neighborhoods, and recommended a series of comprehensive changes to New Jersey's recovery programs to address racial and economic imbalances in funding allocations. Fair Share Housing Center (FSHC), the Housing and Community Development Network of New Jersey (the Network), the Latino Action Network (LAN), and the NAACP New Jersey State Conference analyzed the performance of New Jersey's Sandy recovery programs to date and made numerous suggestions to increase transparency, fairness and efficiency throughout the rebuilding effort. The recommendations are aimed at making the State's Sandy aid process work better in advance of the next \$1.4 billion in federal funds, which the State is expected to submit a draft plan for later this month.

"We need to make sure that the next \$1.4 billion in federal funds are distributed more fairly and transparently," said Adam Gordon, Fair Share Housing Center staff attorney. "The recommendations today will help make sure that everyone impacted by Sandy has a fair opportunity to get recovery funds."

The data in *The State of Sandy Recovery* was obtained from the Christie Administration through litigation after an Open Public Records Act request by FSHC and from other public sources. Based on the data and firsthand accounts from displaced renters, homeowners, and community groups, the report suggests three specific areas of improvement aimed at fair access to funding and a more transparent and efficient process.

"We are disturbed by African-Americans being rejected at two and a half times the rate that whites are for Sandy rebuilding," said Richard Smith, President of the NAACP New Jersey State Conference. "The next round of federal recovery funds must include all communities impacted by the storm equally."



“Latinos impacted by Sandy must be fully and fairly included in New Jersey’s recovery going forward,” said Frank Argote-Freyre, President of the Latino Action Network. “That means providing adequate funding for renters who were disproportionately Latino, ensuring people who were misled by the incorrect Spanish website or inadequate outreach in Latino communities receive funding, and making the process fully transparent.”

“New Jersey residents affected by the storm deserve a fair rebuilding process that treats people and communities with respect and dignity,” said Staci Berger, president and CEO of the Network. “Elected officials at every level of government who share our goal of rebuilding neighborhoods and getting people back into their homes should read this report and take corrective action to improve the transparency and fairness of the process. These recommendations can move all of New Jersey forward and rebuild the lives of those affected and restore thriving communities around the state.”

To view *The State of Sandy Recovery* visit <http://tinyurl.com/StateofSandy>.

Housing and Community Development Network of New Jersey

The Housing and Community Development Network of New Jersey (the Network) is a statewide association of more than 250 affordable housing and community development corporations, individuals and other organizations that support the creation of housing and economic opportunities for low- and moderate-income New Jerseyans.

Fair Share Housing Center

Fair Share Housing Center (FSHC), founded in 1975, is the only public interest organization entirely devoted to defending the housing rights of New Jersey’s poor through enforcement of the Mount Laurel Doctrine, the landmark decision that prohibits economic discrimination through exclusionary zoning and requires all towns to provide their “fair share” of their region’s need for affordable housing.

NJ State Conference of the NAACP

The NJ NAACP is the New Jersey state conference of the nation's oldest and largest civil rights organization. From the ballot box to the classroom, the thousands of dedicated workers, organizers, leaders and members who make up the NAACP continue to fight for social justice for all Americans.

Latino Action Network

The Latino Action Network is a grassroots organization composed of individuals and organizations that are committed to engaging in collective action at the local, state and national levels in order to advance the equitable inclusion of the diverse Latino communities in all aspects of United States society.

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