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***CORZINE, DORIA CALLED UPON TO FIX PROBLEMS
HIGHLIGHTED IN PUBLIC ADVOCATE'S REPORT ON COAH***

Housing advocates welcome growing focus on New Jersey's housing crisis

Trenton, New Jersey- Fair Share Housing Center (FSHC) called on Governor Corzine and DCA Commissioner Joseph Doria to respond to the New Jersey Public Advocate's report on affordable housing in New Jersey by making good on the Administration's promise to adopt an equitable affordable housing policy.

"Ron Chen has stood up for the rights of hundreds of thousands of New Jersey families in need of a decent place to live," said FSHC Executive Director Peter J. O'Connor, one of the attorneys who brought the original Mount Laurel case in 1970. "Affordable housing needs to be more affordable and in the right places. Wealthy towns should not be excused from doing their fair share and should not be able to pay poor towns to take their affordable housing. All eyes are on Governor Corzine and Commissioner Doria to follow the Public Advocate's lead and finally do something about affordable housing."

The Public Advocate's report highlights several major problems with the COAH process: COAH's failure to provide any housing to hundreds of thousands of New Jersey families who make less than \$25,000 per year or who pay too much for their current housing; COAH's claims that housing in New Jersey has "filtered" by dropping in price over the past several years; and loopholes in COAH's rules that give two credits for just one house. O'Connor noted that all of these flaws, in addition to harming people who need affordable housing, also harm New Jersey's cities and older suburbs.

"It is not fair to ask troubled cities and the towns near them to provide all of the state's affordable housing," O'Connor said. "It doesn't work for municipalities, and it doesn't work for families who want a choice about where to live and work. Wealthy towns should do their fair share."

O'Connor noted that the flaws in filtering alone highlighted by the Public Advocate had redistributed credit for 411 affordable homes in Bayonne, 583 affordable homes in Newark, 528 affordable homes in East Orange, and 116 affordable homes in Pennsauken, among other cities and older suburbs, to wealthy suburbs such as Moorestown, Parsippany-Troy Hills, and Princeton.

O'Connor expressed hope that new DCA Commissioner Joseph Doria would provide a new direction on affordable housing for the state, noting his experience as Mayor of Bayonne, where about half the residents are low- and moderate-income.

"We are hopeful that Commissioner Doria will adopt the Public Advocate's report and require significant affordable housing in high opportunity suburban municipalities," O'Connor said.

Fair Share Housing Center, founded in 1975, is the only public interest organization devoted entirely to defending the housing rights of New Jersey's poor through implementing the Mount Laurel doctrine. The report comes just two months before a court-imposed deadline on COAH to adopt new rules in response to the Appellate Division's January ruling in a case brought by FSHC and three other groups holding that COAH's prior rules were unconstitutional.

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