



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

# NEWS

ROD R. BLAGOJEVICH – GOVERNOR

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

June 22, 2007

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## **Governor Blagojevich announces \$2.2 million to help low-income homeowners preserve and remain in their homes**

*Rehabilitation grants will help 386 families across Illinois lower their utility bills and improve the safety and quality of their homes*

CHICAGO – Governor Rod R. Blagojevich today announced \$2.2 million in rehabilitation grants to help 386 low-income homeowners in Illinois, including seniors and disabled individuals, pay for home repairs, lower their utility bills and continue to afford their homes. The funds will be used to finance the statewide Energy Conservation and Home Repair Program.

“People shouldn’t be forced to give up their homes because they can’t afford to fix a leaking roof or pay to install lights or windows that will help them save on energy bills. These grants will help homeowners reduce their utility bills, afford costly, but necessary repairs, and keep their homes,” said Gov. Blagojevich.

The State has committed nearly \$2.2 million to the Energy Conservation and Home Repair Program - \$1.2 million from the Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services (HFS) and \$1 million from the State Affordable Housing Trust Fund allocated by the Illinois Housing Development Authority (IHDA). This funding will help 200 homeowners across the state in 2007 and 2008 to improve the conditions of their homes, as well as enhance the energy efficiency of the property.

The Energy Conservation and Home Repair Program will be administered locally by the eight community action agencies listed below. HFS will make grants to these community action agencies directly, while IHDA’s grant will be made to the Illinois Community Action Association, which has administered the program in partnership with HFS for the last 13 years.

<b>2007/2008 Energy Conservation and Home Repair Program</b>				
<b>Service Provider</b>	<b>County</b>	<b>HFS Funding</b>	<b>IHDA Funding</b>	<b>No. of homeowners to be helped</b>
Community Contacts, Inc.	Kane	\$117,647	\$100,000	20
Community and Economic Development Association of Cook County, Inc.	Cook	\$352,941	\$300,000	60
East Central Illinois Community Action Agency	Iroquois and Ford	\$117,647	\$100,000	20
Embarras River Basin Agency, Inc.	Lawrence	\$117,647	\$100,000	20
Fulton County Health Department	Fulton	\$117,647	\$100,000	20
MCS Community Services	Morgan and Scott	\$117,647	\$100,000	20
Project NOW, Inc.	Rock Island	\$117,647	\$100,000	20
Tri-County Opportunities Council	Whiteside and LaSalle	\$117,647	\$100,000	20
	<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$1,176,470</b>	<b>\$1,000,000</b>	<b>200</b>

Homeowners will receive up to \$8,945 in energy conservation measures and home repairs, such as the replacement or repair of doors, windows, furnaces and roofs. To qualify, applicants must earn less than 50 percent of the area median income. For example, in Cook County, a family of four with a household income under \$37,700 may qualify. Applicants should contact the toll-free Keep Cool Illinois hotline at 877-411-9276 for a referral to their local community action agency.

“Weatherization of homes is yet another step that the Governor is taking to keep Illinoisans in their own homes and out of the harmful elements,” said Barry Maram, Director of Illinois Healthcare and Family Services. “These grants provide homeowners with valuable resources and tips to prepare their homes and families for the varying Illinois weather. Without these grants many more Illinoisans would be forced to give up their homes because the cost of improving them would prove too great.”

“We are grateful to the Governor and the State for providing this funding and for recognizing that the Energy Conservation and Home Repair Program has helped ease a huge burden for the 2,300 homeowners we have been able to help so far,” said Dan Manfredo, program manager at the Illinois Community Action Association. “Based on our experience with administering this program, we estimate that this round of funding will assist around 80 seniors and 70 homeowners with a physical disability. We also target families with small children.”

The Governor also announced today that IHDA has allocated a \$750,000 grant from the State Affordable Housing Trust Fund to the Historic Chicago Bungalow Association. The grant will be used to help 186 low-income bungalow owners in Chicago rehabilitate their homes and meet

city building codes. Work including repairs to roofs, windows, gutters, electrical systems, furnaces and hot water heaters will help improve the energy efficiency of the homes.

Grant recipients will receive a maximum grant of \$5,000 from the State that will be matched by other state and local resources. Applicants must be Chicago bungalow owners and have a household income of less than \$37,700 for a family of four. Applicants should contact the Historic Chicago Bungalow Association at 312-642-9900.

“For seven years, the Historic Chicago Bungalow Association has worked for the preservation and revitalization of Chicago bungalows, which constitute approximately one-third of the city's single family housing stock. The funds allocated by the Governor provide a valuable resource to preserving the affordability of these homes for hundreds of families who otherwise wouldn't be able to afford the repairs. The grant also allows us to maintain one of the city's most distinctive housing types,” said Annette Conti, executive director of the Historic Chicago Bungalow Association.

“Governor Blagojevich recognizes that the State's ability to preserve its existing affordable housing stock is just as crucial as creating new units. That's why, as the State's affordable housing agency, IHDA has financed the Energy Conservation and Home Repair Program for more than 10 years and the Historic Chicago Bungalow Initiative for the last four years,” said DeShana L. Forney, IHDA Executive Director.

IHDA finances several statewide programs that assist low-income homeowners and landlords to rehabilitate and preserve the affordability of their properties including the Single-Family Owner-Occupied Rehabilitation Program and the Small Rental Properties Program. Last year alone, IHDA provided more than \$17.4 million to help more than 1,130 Illinois families and individuals preserve and remain in their homes.

The State's efforts to increase affordable housing options for its residents is guided by the Governor's annual Comprehensive Housing Plans which provide a road map for how to leverage housing dollars. The 2007 Housing Plan: *Affordable Housing Dimensions* identified \$763 million in spending earmarked for affordable housing at nine different state agencies that will help approximately 146,000 Illinois residents. This year's Plan also highlighted how the Governor's vision as outlined in the first two Plans - *Building for Success* (2005) and *On the Road to Success* (2006) - is already reshaping affordable housing in Illinois.

The Comprehensive Housing Plans are developed by the Governor's Housing Task Force, and organized and led by IHDA. The 35 members of the Task Force are advocates, developers, lenders, and state agency representatives, including eight Illinois state agency directors. The Housing Plans aim to improve the coordination of housing resources among State agencies, help more Illinois households afford their rent or mortgage, and promote economic growth in communities throughout the state. Copies of Illinois' Comprehensive Housing Plans are available at [www.ihda.org](http://www.ihda.org).