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News Release

First Governor's Conference on Affordable Housing opens in Chicago

More than 500 housing practitioners from around the country gather to empower Illinois organizations to increase affordable housing options for Illinois families

CHICAGO – The first Governor's Conference on Affordable Housing opened in Chicago today at the Chicago History Museum. The one-and-a-half-day conference includes 18 different sessions that cover the length and breadth of affordable housing development, finance and policy to empower Illinois organizations so they can provide more quality affordable housing in Illinois.

“Under the leadership of Governor Rod R. Blagojevich, Illinois is nationally recognized for successes in affordable housing. This conference, recommended by the Governor's Affordable Housing Task Force, brings together all the great minds from the state's the public, private and non-profit affordable housing sectors to create new partnerships, contemplate new ideas, and develop strategies in Illinois,” said Kelly King Dibble, executive director of the Illinois Housing Development Authority (IHDA).

Former Secretary of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development under President Bill Clinton, Henry Cisneros will be the keynote speaker at the welcome reception Tuesday evening. At the reception, Cisneros will talk about the housing challenges and opportunities facing America in the new century.

The Governor's Housing Task Force will also recognize State Rep. Arthur Turner (D-Chicago) for his leadership and dedication to affordable housing at Wednesday's luncheon. Among his achievements is the introduction of the State Affordable Housing Trust Fund in 1990, which has since become the state's most important resource to help finance the creation and preservation of safe, decent and affordable housing for low-income families and individuals.

Barry Bluestone, Dean of Northeastern University's School of Social Science, Urban Affairs, and Public Policy, and the founding director of the University's Center for Urban and Regional

Policy in Boston will deliver the keynote speech at the luncheon. He will talk about cutting edge housing policies and programs in Massachusetts and explore if they can be replicated in Illinois.

Concurrent sessions will highlight IHDA's multifamily, single family and tax credit programs and will discuss topics that include supportive living finance and how it works; the status, financing and implementation of the incoming Rental Housing Support Program; innovative homeownership programs for municipalities and how to get started; and tips of how to successfully compete for the state's Income Housing Tax Credits.

The Conference is the latest step taken by Governor Blagojevich to improve the affordability of Illinois' housing stock. In 2003, he established the first statewide Affordable Housing Task Force to help develop a coordinated approach to finance and develop affordable housing. In 2005, the Task Force created the landmark *Illinois' Comprehensive Housing Plan: Building for Success* which identified statewide housing needs and established tangible to meet the needs of six priority populations: very low income families; low income seniors; low income people with disabilities; homeless people and those at risk of becoming homeless; low and moderate income families and people unable to find affordable housing near jobs or transportation; and low income families and people living in existing affordable housing in danger of becoming unaffordable. The *2006 Illinois Comprehensive Housing Plan: On the Road to Success* continues to build on the coordinated success of the 2005 Comprehensive Housing Plan.

In June this year, Gov. Blagojevich signed the milestone Comprehensive Housing Planning Act into law to create and preserve affordable housing across the state and ensure that the housing needs of the identified vulnerable populations remain a priority in Illinois for many years to come.

About the Illinois Housing Development Authority

IHDA (www.ihda.org) is a self-supporting state agency that finances the creation and the preservation of affordable housing across Illinois. Since its creation by an act of the Illinois legislature in 1967, IHDA has allocated more than \$7.27 billion and financed more than 174,000 units of affordable housing across the state. IHDA accomplishes its mission through a number of federal and state funding sources, including the Illinois Affordable Housing Trust Fund, the Illinois Affordable Housing Tax Credits Fund, the allocation of federal Low Income Housing Tax Credits, HOME Investment Partnership funds and others. IHDA is also a bonding authority, and independently sells bonds, based on its own good credit, to finance affordable housing across the state.