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MSHDA-Legal

post

September 24, 2007

Dear MSHDA Representatives:

I am writing to you regarding the 2008-09 Qualified Annual Plan. I am concerned that you will not give full consideration to the Special Housing Needs of all people with disabilities. As many of us live on limited fixed incomes and deal with mobility problems, you should know that housing affordability and accessibility are essential to our well being.

Here are some specific suggestions in your consideration of our housing needs:

1. Keep the requirements that 10% of the units in a project get leasing priority for Supportive Housing Tenants.

2. Keep the requirements for low income targeting-10% of LIHTC units with income and rents at 40% of median income and 10% at 30% of median.

3. Continue to include persons served by the Mental Health System in the 20% set aside for Supportive Housing/Housing for Persons with Special Needs.

4. WITHIN THE PLAN'S HEAVY STRESS ON SERVING THE "HOMELESS", WE WOULD LIKE A BROADER RECOGNITION THAT PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES WHO LIVE ON OR NEAR THE SSI INCOME LIMIT NEED MORE CHOICES FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING.

5. We also ask that the QAP definition of Special Needs/ Supportive Housing projects clearly include people transitioning from nursing facilities, other institutional settings, AFC and Homes for the Aged.

6. We strongly urge raising the requirements for numbers of units that have accessible features.

Ideally, all units should have AT LEAST basic accessibility (visitability). Someone visiting a wheelchair should be able to enter the unit, negotiate the hallways, and use the bathroom. It would also be ideal to have the master bedroom on an accessible floor.

Reports from builders are that cost to BUILD accessibly add very little to the overall cost of building. The cost being minimal and the benefits to a large segment of the population being substantial, it no longer makes sense for Michigan to build inaccessible housing.

Thank you very much.

Rice Clients and Cacil member

Sincerely,

Jerell L. Shepherd

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