



Dear Public Housing Agencies and Workforce Investment Boards:

On February 17, 2009, President Obama signed the historic American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (the “Recovery Act” or “Act”). As the President said, “The Act provides a direct fiscal boost to help lift our Nation from the greatest economic crisis in our lifetimes and lay the foundation for future growth.” As Secretaries of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL), we are working hard to ensure that this fiscal boost lays the foundation for future growth for all of our communities and are writing to ask for your cooperation and participation in this effort.

Through the Recovery Act, the Administration is making a substantial investment -- \$13.6 billion in HUD’s housing and community development programs and \$3.9 billion in employment and training programs administered by DOL. These investments reflect the principal goals of the Act, namely to generate jobs in the near term, lay the foundation for long term economic growth (e.g., through investments in areas like energy efficiency) and mitigate the impact of the economic downturn on distressed communities and the most vulnerable populations in our country.

As the Secretaries for HUD and DOL, we recognize that we must work together to make these goals a reality. That is why we have come together to create a partnership between our two agencies to bolster pathways to training and employment for residents of HUD housing as a part of our Recovery Act Programs. As a first step in this partnership, we are writing to encourage local Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs) and Public Housing Agencies (PHAs) to work collaboratively to identify opportunities to train and place public housing residents into jobs created by PHAs’ Recovery-funded capital improvement projects. It is our hope that such collaboration will especially help residents find training programs and sustainable employment in the green jobs sector that will be created by the Administration’s investments in energy efficiency, Labor’s workforce training investments and HUD’s investment in public housing through the Public Housing Capital Fund.

Our Departments stand ready to assist in this collaboration. Through their One-Stop Career Centers, WIBs offer job training programs and other services that improve the employment prospects of adults, youth, low-income individuals, and dislocated workers, and can be a valuable tool to assist PHAs with meeting the statutory and regulatory requirements of Section 3 of the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1968. Section 3 requires PHAs to direct new employment, training, and contracting opportunities created during the expenditure of HUD funds to low- and very low-income residents of the community where the funds are spent,

particularly those receiving housing assistance, and certain businesses that substantially employ these persons.

We strongly encourage PHAs and WIBs to reach out to each other and engage in a dialogue about how we can work together to create green employment opportunities for residents of HUD housing. At a minimum, PHAs and their contractors should list any job openings with their WIB and its One Stop System. WIBs and PHAs should cooperatively engage in outreach activities to inform public housing residents of these job opportunities and corresponding training offerings in their communities. In addition, recognizing that residents of public housing may have significant barriers to employment, the WIBs and PHAs should work collaboratively to identify partners to ensure that quality work supports are in place. It is expected that PHAs and WIBs should be open and receptive to these dialogues.

We share the President's confidence about the promise and potential of the Recovery Act and strongly believe that PHAs and WIBs can play a critical role in economic recovery. We look forward to working together to make the goals of the Recovery Act a reality.

Sincerely,



Secretary Shaun Donovan  
U.S. Department of Housing and  
Urban Development



Secretary Hilda L. Solis  
U.S. Department of Labor