



CITY OF PORTSMOUTH

Municipal Complex
1 Junkins Avenue
Portsmouth, New Hampshire 03801
(603) 610-7200
Fax (603) 427-1526

Thomas G. Ferrini
Mayor

September 23, 2011

The Honorable Jeanne Shaheen
U.S. Senate
520 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Shaheen:

I understand the House Transportation-HUD Subcommittee passed the FY12 funding bill for HUD on Thursday, September 8th, which includes the appropriation for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. I am writing to let you know how vital CDBG funding is to the City of Portsmouth and of the great concern we have about reductions in CDBG funding because of the vital role CDBG funding plays in the lives of Portsmouth's low and moderate income residents.

I have learned the Subcommittee's bill includes a 50% cut to the amount of funding that can be used for the administration of CDBG programs. This is of very great concern to the City of Portsmouth because CDBG-funded programs take substantial City staff time to administer. This is due in large part to the extensive federal rules and regulations that must be followed. For example, CDBG-funded efforts must adhere to detailed funding eligibility criteria, strict procurement standards, prescriptive labor and wage rate requirements and extensive programmatic and financial reporting requirements. In addition, CDBG programs require extensive public outreach, public involvement and public notice, and are also administratively intensive due to the particular needs of populations served as they relate to socioeconomic and disability issues, as well as language and transportation barriers. A 50% cut to CDBG administrative funding will have a very adverse effect on this community's ability to deliver CDBG-funded services, and carry out CDBG-funded projects, that benefit are residents who are most in need -- those earning low and moderate incomes.

I urge you to assist us in any way you can to insure that there is no reduction to CDBG administration funding and thank you in advance for your help. Should you need any additional information, we would be happy to provide it. Please do not hesitate to contact my office at 610-7200 or Community Development Director David Moore at 610-7226.

Sincerely,

Thomas G. Ferrini
Mayor