



VONCIEL JONES HILL
DISTRICT 5

10 February 2011

The Honorable Pete Sessions
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4332

VIA FACSIMILE: 202-225-5878

Dear Representative Sessions:

On behalf of the Dallas City Council, I write to express our deep concern about various proposals to reduce funding or eliminate the Community Development Block Grant ["CDBG"] Program. We are especially alarmed by House legislation ["HR 408"] that would eliminate CDBG. We appreciate the significant budget constraints the federal government faces; however, arbitrarily reducing or eliminating a proven and successful program is not the answer. Reducing or eliminating CDBG will have little budgetary impact at the federal level but would impose significant hardship on the City of Dallas and other cities. We urge you to oppose reducing or eliminating CDBG and to support fully funding the program at four (\$4,000,000,000) billion dollars in FY 2011 and FY 2012.

We are especially concerned that Congress and the Administration are contemplating reducing or eliminating CDBG when the program has already seen more than its fair share of reductions during the past decade. Due to a combination of reduced funding and new program participants, the City of Dallas has seen our annual CDBG allocation fall by nearly fifteen (15%) percent since 1995.

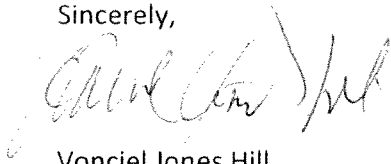
The City of Dallas uses CDBG and its sister program, HOME, to revitalize our older, low- and moderate-income neighborhoods. In addition to infrastructure and public facility improvements, CDBG has funded a wide array of home repair, rehabilitation and construction projects. Many of our community service providers also rely on CDBG for a portion of their funding. Just as importantly,

CDBG allows Dallas to leverage federal funds for significant private investment. For example, since 2006, we have used thirty-one million (\$31,000,000.00) dollars in CDBG funds to leverage one-hundred eighteen million (\$118,000,000.00) dollars in private investments, including significant investments in workforce housing and substantial investments in central Dallas and near Dallas Area Rapid Transit light rail stations. Additionally, because Section 108 loans are backed by future City CDBG allocations, a major decrease or elimination of CDBG funding would jeopardize this important financing tool.

If needed, I shall be happy to provide you with additional background and data about Dallas' CDBG program. In summary, however, much of the progress we have seen in Dallas over the past twenty-five (25) years would not have been possible without the CDBG program.

Thank you for your attention to this issue and for all that you do for Dallas.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Vonciel Jones Hill', written over a faint, light-colored signature line.

Vonciel Jones Hill
Chair, Legislative Ad Hoc Committee
Councilmember, District 5