HABITAT FOR HUMANITY MICHIGAN STATEMEMT OF SUPPORT FOR THE MICHIGAN HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FUND.

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Habitat for Humanity Michigan, its eighty affiliates, nearly 1,000 board members and over 25,000 active volunteers support the funding of the Michigan Housing and Community Development Fund.

HABITAT IS ABOUT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Habitat for Humanity Michigan has built over 3,000 houses in the last fifteen years, the majority of them coming in the last seven or eight years. The market value of the houses produced by Habitat affiliates is in excess of 300 million dollars. Contrary to popular opinion, Habitat for Humanity sells these houses to the individual homeowners at no profit and provides the family with a 20 year 0% mortgage.

Habitat is involved in changing lives, developing cities, towns and communities that are vibrant and provide an attractive place for people to live and grow. Habitat in partnership with MCAAA, LISC, CEDAM, MSHDA, Great Lakes Capital Fund and The Michigan Interfaith Trust Fund have developed Vision 2020, an organization that is designed to eliminate substandard housing and to create a vibrant core city in twenty communities by 2020. There are many more communities that need help.

Habitat affiliates receive from the Michigan State Housing Development Authority approximately $10,000 per house as a buy down on the mortgage. With this $10,000, in kind donations and discounted materials, walls and cabinets from the Prison Program and volunteer labor we are able build a house for just over $60,000 on average. This is a good investment on the part of MSHDA.

Habitat has thirty-five ReStores across the state which employ 75 full time workers who join with volunteers to recycle and resell building materials. This keeps these materials out of the landfills and provides an opportunity for low income people to purchase materials to upgrade their home at about ten to fifteen cents on the dollar.

Habitat families are paying property taxes on 300 million dollars of property value.

HABITAT IS ABOUT AN ECONOMIC DIVERSE WORKFORCE

Habitat has a strong work force as well. While we are primarily a volunteer organization, currently we have over 200 staff members who work full-time and many other part-time members assist the volunteers in building these homes. These individuals help to stabilize the communities

and add economic value to their communities. In addition to this we have approximately 70 AmeriCorps and VISTA workers across the state, generally young people who are interested in exploring the nonprofit world before making a final career choice. These individuals primarily work in the area of volunteer development, family development and construction. They provide a vital resource in their communities.

Families who live in Habitat houses also provide the community with a stable and diverse work force. Most family members work in the community in which their house is located.

HABITAT IS ABOUT INVESTING IN PEOPLE

Habitat finds that less than 1% of our houses are ever resold. We know from a recent Davenport University study that 68% of our families almost immediately upon moving into a house go out and get a better job and make more money. 42% of the adults go back to school and get additional education and training so they can better serve their families and communities. 62% of the homes are sold to single females in their late twenties and early thirties with two to three young children who are at the most vulnerable stage of their lives. The house provides stability and a 50% reduction in family conflict. The Davenport study also shows that their health improves by 25% and the children do better in school. All of this results in a stable family life and in turn provides for economic growth within our state.

Habitat also partners with the Department of Domestic Violence. 10% of our houses are sold to victims of domestic violence. This means that these individuals have moved through a shelter into supportive housing, have been able to secure employment, have repaired their credit and now can purchase a Habitat house. This stabilizes the family and the community.

When the Michigan Housing and Community Development Fund is funded, Habitat will do its part in rebuilding the economy in Michigan by working with the for profit and non profit organizations in the state to make this great state of ours an even better place to live and to work.

Thank you for your allowing me to present Habitat's position on the Michigan Community Housing Development Fund. I encourage the funding of the Michigan Housing and Community Development Fund.