



HUD awards \$450,000 to two Vermont organizations

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The US Department of Housing and Urban Development has awarded \$450,000 to two Vermont organizations to educate the public and combat housing and lending discrimination in the state, one to Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity for \$125,000 and the other to Vermont Legal Aid Inc of \$325,000. Nationally, HUD awarded more than \$40.8 million to 108 fair housing organizations and non-profit agencies in 36 states and the District of Columbia. This year's award represents a \$13.2 million increase over last year's award and includes \$10 million to fund activities that address lending discrimination, including mortgage rescue scams.

"The record increase in support to local fair housing and community organizations demonstrates the Obama Administration's firm commitment to ending housing discrimination and providing help to families victimized by mortgage scams," stated HUD Secretary Shaun Donovan.

"Ending housing discrimination takes more than the efforts of Washington," said John Trasviña, HUD's Assistant Secretary for Fair Housing & Equal Opportunity. "These grants enable community groups all over the nation to help HUD enforce the Fair Housing Act, make the public more aware of their fair housing rights and ensure that housing providers understand their responsibilities under the law."

The grants announced today are funded through HUD's Fair Housing Initiatives Program (FHIP) and will be used to investigate allegations of housing discrimination, educate the public and the housing industry about their rights and responsibilities under the Fair Housing Act, and work to promote equal housing opportunities.

The categories grants were awarded in include:

- **Private Enforcement Initiative grants (PEI)** – HUD awarded \$28 million to support organization that investigate alleged housing discrimination, and enforce the Fair Housing Act and state and local laws that are substantially equivalent to the Act. Groups will also use the funding to conduct testing to protect individuals living in minority neighborhoods from mortgage rescue scams.

- **Education and Outreach Initiative grants (EOI)** – HUD awarded \$6.8 million to organizations that educate the public and housing providers about their rights and obligations under federal, state, and local fair housing laws. Groups will also conduct fair lending workshops, community meetings, and individual counseling activities focused on homeowners at risk for discrimination.

- **Fair Housing Organizations Initiative grants (FHOI)** – HUD awarded \$6 million to organizations serving rural and immigrant populations in areas lacking existing fair housing organizations, or otherwise underserved. Included will be activities that provide direct assistance to victims of fraudulent or predatory mortgage rescue schemes.

HUD's mission is to create strong, sustainable, inclusive communities and quality affordable homes for all. HUD is working to strengthen the housing market to bolster the economy and protect consumers; meet the need for quality affordable rental homes; utilize housing as a platform for improving quality of life; build inclusive and sustainable communities free from discrimination; and transform the way HUD does business. More information about HUD and its programs is available on the Internet at www.hud.gov and espanol.hud.gov.

VT Grantees	Grant Category	Grant Amount
Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity	EOI	\$125,000
VT Legal Aid, Inc.	PEI	\$325,000
	Total VT Grants	\$450,000