

Talking Points on Housing

I am writing to ask you to help homeowners avoid foreclosure and address the housing crisis in NC by supporting funding for:

1. housing counselors,
2. legal service providers,
3. the Housing Trust Fund, and
4. the Home Protection Pilot Program.

I recognize that funding is limited, but now more than ever, it is critical that we address the housing crisis. Here are some facts about foreclosure and housing in North Carolina:

- * The number of foreclosure filings between 1998 and 2007 increased approximately 200 %.
- * In 2007, nearly 50,000 foreclosures were filed, and in 2008, filings are expected to reach 60,000.
- * The loss of homeownership through foreclosure is devastating to families and communities across the state.
- * Home foreclosures not only result in the loss of homeownership, but also lower the property values of surrounding homes and harm communities through lower tax values.
- * Currently more than 2 million NC residents are living in substandard housing because quality housing is not affordable.

You can help NC Homeowners by providing funding for:

1. Housing Counseling that helps homeowners avoid foreclosure
 - * Studies have shown that housing counseling provided to homeowners at risk of foreclosure significantly reduces home loss.
2. Legal Service Providers, who have had great success defending against filed foreclosures
 - * Homeowners represented by an attorney in defense of foreclosure have a much greater likelihood of keeping their home; in fact over 90 percent of homeowners represented by Legal Aid of NC have kept their home.
 - * Legal service providers are operating beyond capacity and need more staff.
3. the NC Housing Trust Fund, which provides affordable rental options and successful home loans
 - * There is a lack of affordable housing in NC and families that have lost a home to foreclosure need quality, affordable rental housing in order to recover from foreclosure and repair the damage done to their credit history.
 - * The Housing Trust Fund creates affordable rental properties and provides quality affordable loans needed to help stabilize the housing market and help people get quality home loans.
4. the Home Protection Pilot Program which helps laid off workers keep their home
 - * The program has provided housing counseling to over 2000 laid off workers and aided over 300 homeowners with bridge loans in 61 counties.
 - * The program is needed statewide to help laid-off workers.

Please provide funding to support housing and homeowners in North Carolina. Thank you for your attention to this important issue.