

Grassley, Bond Work for Accountability with Stimulus Dollars for Housing

Written by Sen. Charles Grassley
Monday, 21 June 2010 13:01

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WASHINGTON –Monday, June 21, 2010

Senators Chuck Grassley and Kit Bond have sent a letter to the Secretary of the Department of Housing and Urban Development, or HUD, reiterating their concerns about possible waste, fraud and abuse in the Department’s distribution of stimulus funds to troubled Public Housing Authorities.

“Our oversight is focused on making sure the federal agencies handling the \$787 billion in stimulus dollars passed by Congress and signed by the president last year are operating with the highest level of transparency and accountability. In this case, taxpayers deserve an answer to why the federal agency gave tens of millions in stimulus dollars to housing authorities it found to be ‘high risk.’ Is there so much pressure to shovel stimulus dollars out the door that responsible stewardship has been abandoned?” Grassley said.

“When families across the nation are still struggling to pay

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bills and put food on the table, the Administration owes Americans answers on why they chose to gamble with taxpayer dollars on risky organizations," Bond said.

Grassley initially sent a letter to HUD on March 15, 2010, in which he cited problems with a number of Public Housing Authorities that had been raised by the HUD Office of Inspector General and not adequately addressed in the HUD response. Today, Grassley and Bond are seeking answers on the accuracy of troubled housing designations and the abuse of stimulus funds.

As ranking member of the Senate appropriations subcommittee that funds our nation's housing programs, Bond has questioned the Administration on their lack of oversight of stimulus funds awarded to troubled PHAs. Bond continues to stress that Congress – and the taxpayer – deserves answers on the benchmarks the Administration is using to hold PHA's accountable for their use of taxpayer dollars. The Senator also has concerns on whether the Administration is putting scarce resources to the best use – including whether they are investing in projects that will address the huge backlog of public housing capital needs.

In its response, HUD agreed to Grassley's suggestion of posting Public Housing Assessment System scores on the HUD website. Grassley and Bond also request that HUD post the following information on its website: location of the Public Housing Authority; fiscal year in which the Public Housing Authority was designated as troubled; categorization of the Public Housing Authority problems (Troubled, Substandard Financial, Substandard Physical, and Substandard Management); the applicable narrative and corrective plan; total number of units involved; level of concern (high, medium, low); stimulus funding risk level; and amount of stimulus funding awarded to Public Housing Authority.

Click [here](http://grassley.senate.gov/about/upload/2010-03-15-Letter-to-HUD.pdf) to read Grassley's initial letter.

Click [here](http://grassley.senate.gov/about/upload/Letter-from-HUD.pdf) to read HUD's response to Grassley.

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</p> <p style="text-indent: 0.5in;" class="MsoNormal">Click here to read Grassley and Bond's June 16 letter to HUD.</p>