

Written by Brian Sullivan
Thursday, 26 August 2010 14:17

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Disaster Recovery Enhancement Fund to support buyouts, relocations, home improvements

WASHINGTON – U.S. Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Secretary Shaun Donovan today awarded nearly \$312 million to 13 states to invest in efforts to reduce the human, physical, and economic toll of future disasters. The grants announced today are provided through HUD's *Disaster Recovery Enhancement Fund* (DREF) and are intended to encourage states to undertake activities and long-term strategies that focus on reducing damages from future natural disasters.

In the past two years, HUD allocated more than \$5.6 billion in disaster recovery funding through its *Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)* to these states. The DREF was established to support the long-term recovery following dozens of natural disasters in 2008. As a result of having received CDBG funds for those disasters, these 13 states were eligible to receive additional allocations based on the significant investment they've made by targeting their CDBG funds to disaster mitigation.

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“An ounce of prevention today can spare communities a world of hurt tomorrow,” said Donovan. “We’re making a serious investment in our future by making certain that when disaster strikes, the impacted communities in these states can weather the storm.”

Disaster mitigation, like those that qualify for funding through the DREF, are a sound investment. According to an [independent study by the National Institute of Building Sciences](#), every dollar spent on disaster mitigation activities saves taxpayers \$4 in future disaster recovery expenses. The 13 states that received funding through the DREF invested nearly \$876 million in disaster mitigation which translates into a total anticipated return on investment of more than \$3.5 billion.

The purpose of the DREF is to reward states that invested CDBG disaster recovery funding in activities that reduce risks from future disasters. HUD recognizes that while these types of activities are often more expensive in the short-term, they dramatically cut recovery costs over the long-term. To help assist with the additional cost of mitigating future risk, DREF funds can be used toward projects meeting unmet disaster recovery needs, and those that include:

- Ø Buyout payments for homeowners living in high-risk areas;
- Ø Optional relocation payments to encourage residents to move to safer locations;
- Ø Home improvement grants to reduce damage risks (property elevation, reinforced garage

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doors and windows, etc.);

Ø Improving and enforcing building codes; and

Ø Developing forward-thinking land-use plans that reduce development in high-risk areas.

HUD is awarding DREF grants to the following states:

State

DREF Allocation

Iowa

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\$84,126,989

Texas

\$67,949,391

Louisiana

\$32,487,882

Florida

\$26,616,675

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Illinois

\$23,517,970

Indiana

\$23,208,985

Wisconsin

\$15,276,319

California

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\$15,000,000

Puerto Rico

\$12,000,000

Mississippi

\$5,438,712

Missouri

\$5,000,000

Kentucky

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\$500,000

Georgia

\$480,000

Total

\$311,602,923

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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.

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ore information about HUD and its programs is available on the Internet at

www.hud.gov

and

espanol.hud.gov

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