

FACT SHEET

January 26, 2009

REQUEST: Maintain the base budget

Olene Walker Housing Loan Fund: Housing Choice Creates Stable Communities

The Olene Walker Housing Loan Fund is a critical piece of funding for many of the homes that are affordable throughout the state of Utah. This funding covers the gap in financing that is necessary for its projects to move forward. Since the Olene Walker Fund was created in 1987, nearly 10,000 affordable homes and apartments have been built or preserved with money from the fund.

The Olene Walker Fund loans money to first-time homebuyers, builders, and developers. It is also used to rehabilitate homes and apartments. As it is a revolving fund, loan payments are returned to the fund allowing it to be used again for future projects. The Olene Walker Fund's mission is to support quality housing options that meet the needs of Utah's individuals and families.

We realize that cuts need to be made to the State budget. However, **the Olene Walker Fund should be held harmless** from these cuts. Utah is getting further and further behind in the number of available, affordable homes. With the current foreclosure situation and economic climate, the fund needs as much support from the Legislature as is possible. Additionally, with the likely loss of one-time appropriation for FY10, the fund is effectively losing \$450,000 in needed revenue (almost 15%).

KEY FACTS

- The fund supported construction or rehabilitation of 913 housing units in FY08
- The fund leveraged \$10.14 for each \$1 from the fund for multi-family projects
- Over 95% of the fund's housing funding is issued as repayable loans
- The fund serves the lower income population at an average of only 34.1% area median income
- The units provide housing for people with special needs, the elderly, persons with disabilities, and victims of domestic violence, all of whom are low-income.
- Affordable housing creates jobs, adds to the local tax base, increases family stability, and reduces health, education, and transportation costs.

The data in this fact sheet is taken from the Olene Walker Housing Loan Fund Annual Report to the Utah State Legislature, 2008.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION contact
Shawn Teigen at shawn@utahcap.org**

Utah Community Action Partnership Association
230 South 500 West, Suite 260, Salt Lake City, UT 84101
801-433-3025 801-596-2011 (fax)
www.utahcap.org

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Why support the Olene Walker Fund?

The fund preserves and produces housing for Utahns that is affordable. However, Utah's need for this housing continues to outpace availability.

For low to moderate-income households there is an estimated 51,000-unit shortage of available, affordable rental housing in Utah. That gap is increasing by 2,500-units each year, above and beyond what the Olene Walker Fund can currently provide.

Why is Utah in the housing business?

The majority of the housing developed by the Olene Walker Fund is mixed income, in which people of all income levels live in the same neighborhood. This helps create socially and economically stable communities.

