

Volunteer Florida FOUNDATION

February 22, 2007

Garrett W. Walton
17 Palafox Place, Suite 394
Pensacola, FL 32503

Dear Garrett:

Per your inquiry regarding the capacity of the nonprofit sector to handle mitigation, I'd suggest we consider the following factors:

(1) In a 3-week period the Department of Financial Services requested that we put out to bid, review and contract with nonprofits to handle mitigation statewide. Despite the quick turn around time, we received interest from 18 qualified non-profits and funded 12 non-profits serving in 12 counties across the state of Florida. Additionally, although we had anticipated only funding about \$6,000,000 in grants, we funded \$8,000,000 because the demonstrated need was so great, and the capacity for the groups seemed to warrant that we move faster than originally contemplated.

(2) While not required to document match for low-income families, our programs have a budgeted match exceeding 50%. Match is provided through staffing and other operating costs, as well as volunteer labor and donated materials. Match sources include in-kind labor and materials, private/community funds, SHIP, HMPG and Federal Home Loan Bank funds.

(3) Some of the organizations we currently fund are part of a network or affiliation that could be interested in replicating the program. These networks and affiliations include:

- 65 - Habitat for Humanity affiliates
- 11 – Area Agencies on Aging
- 9 Neighbor Works Affiliates
- 10 Community Action Agencies
- 3 Rebuild organizations
- 31 Community Development Corporations or affiliates/partners

Other organizations that may be interested include:

- Other non-profits funded under DCA's - CSBG, Low Income Energy Assistance or weatherization programs
- Volunteer Centers
- Organizations serving individuals with disabilities

- Nonprofit housing organizations
- Family Care Councils

Given the number of organizations interested in this issue, I would anticipate we could easily expand the infrastructure across the state – especially in regions such as Jacksonville where there are no currently approved programs. How much to expand the infrastructure is likely related to a determination from the state as to whether this program will be ongoing, and therefore whether the training and work with all of these programs is worthwhile. If we were to expand to areas of greatest need and areas where we know there is an infrastructure to support the effort, I think we could easily handle a minimum of \$24,000,000 annually in the nonprofit sector. Since we funded about \$24,000,000 in private funds after the 2004 and 2005 storms, this would represent about a doubling in effort – containable growth.

In sum, do we think that there is greater capacity to assist with mitigation efforts? Absolutely. One key issue on expansion would be the need for greater training to nonprofits should be available as they are taking on programs that they may have limited experience. On the upside, however, they are very familiar with the low-income personnel and hope to work with them in a caring and helpful manner.

Please let me know if there is additional information with which I can assist.

Sincerely,

Liza McFadden
President

