

Appleseed This Week

eNewsletter - December 10, 2009

Cast Your Vote for Appleseed!

The Chase Charity Campaign is giving away \$5 million and asking Facebook users to select the nonprofits they would like to support! If you have a Facebook account, [CLICK HERE](#) and vote for "[Appleseed Foundation, Inc.](#)" as one of your favorite charities.

If Appleseed amasses enough votes, we will receive a portion of the \$5 million donated by Chase! As always, this funding will help advance our efforts to protect and support vulnerable communities across the country.

Please take a moment to vote today! The first round of voting ends December 11. Each person can vote for up to 20 organizations, so you can designate "[Appleseed Foundation, Inc.](#)" and other worthy nonprofits!

Texas Must Submit Improved Disaster Relief Plan

\$1.7B Should Target Low and Moderate Income Homeowners

Despite persistent warnings from Texas Appleseed and other advocates, Texas' plan to distribute \$1.7 billion in federal disaster relief for local victims of Hurricanes Dolly and Ike failed to comply with federal law and regulations. As a result, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development refused to accept the plan and is requiring the state to draft a new version that complies with those mandates.

"We are pleased that HUD is holding the state accountable for making sure these funds are spent on the low and moderate income Texans most devastated by disasters," said Rebecca Lightsey, executive director of Texas Appleseed. "We now look forward to working with the state on a plan that meets both federal requirements and the real recovery needs of Texas families."

HUD's rejection of the plan, documented in a Nov. 10 letter to Texas Governor Rick Perry, is primarily the result of the state's failure to submit a detailed description of how the recovery funds will be used or to provide an opportunity for public comment on the strategy.

Citing the inadequacy of the plan and the absence of fair housing compliance, the letter echoes many of the concerns raised in an administrative complaint filed by Texas Appleseed and the Texas Low Income Housing Information Service in late October. Relevant documents, including the Center's comments and HUD's letter to Gov. Perry, are available on the Texas Appleseed website, www.texasappleseed.net.

The Center had been warning the state since December 2008 that its action plan failed to follow federal law by ignoring core recovery needs - particularly the housing needs of low and

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moderate income families - that disaster relief funding is primarily intended to meet under the federal Community Development Block Grant program.

Texas has already received \$1.3 billion in federal disaster recovery funding for the 2008 hurricanes. Around \$500 million of that funding has not yet been distributed, and the local governments that did receive grants will not have programs in place to begin repairing and rebuilding homes until early next year.

For more information on Texas Appleseed's involvement in shaping a distribution plan more supportive of the populations most in need, contact Madison Sloan at msloan@texasappleseed.net.