



**Cincinnati-Hamilton County  
Community Action Agency**  
*We help make things happen*

## STATEMENT

**Mark B. Lawson, Esq., Board Chair**

**Cincinnati-Hamilton County Community Action Agency**

**(December 2, 2011)**

CAA is proud of the work it has done in Cincinnati and Hamilton County to provide low-to moderate-income individuals the opportunity to improve the quality of life for themselves, their families and our entire community. CAA's administration of the Home Weatherization Assistance Program ("HWAP") exemplifies the agency's commitment to serve the needs of households throughout the region.

CAA has expended \$13.1 million in federal stimulus funds since 2009. Some 1,535 homes have been weatherized and 50 jobs were created or retained under the HWAP program. CAA has been accountable and responsible to OCA for HWAP expenditures since the beginning of the program. An independent audit of all of CAA's programs, including HWAP, conducted by Clark Schaefer Hackett & Co. through 2010 gave the agency a clean bill of health.

The Office of Community Assistance ("OCA") has now informed CAA that it is terminating the HWAP grant. We strongly disagree with, and will aggressively challenge, the decision by the Office of Community Assistance ("OCA") of the Ohio Department of Development ("ODOD") to terminate CAA's grant to manage the weatherization program. The decision to terminate the CAA grant is based upon what we assert is an unfair and misleading audit report by OCA of invoices and paperwork related to weatherization projects in the Cincinnati area. That audit report was released this week just prior to the release of a report by the Ohio Inspector General criticizing the ODOD's oversight of the statewide weatherization program.

The facts are that since CAA began administering the expenditure of stimulus dollars for weatherization, it followed precisely the guidelines of the OCA, which were to complete projects expeditiously. We received no indications from OCA that there were any problems in accounting for these expenditures until its mid-2011 audit that raised questions about billing invoices and other paperwork. CAA quickly responded with a detailed documentation of the program's records, but OCA has declined repeated requests for meetings to discuss the audit.

We are disappointed and alarmed with this sudden turn of events and change of attitude about CAA's stewardship of the HWAP program. We have requested an urgent meeting with OCA to share our concerns, and we are awaiting the agency's response. And in the meantime, we are preparing an appeal of the notice of termination, and will use the appeal process to aggressively defend CAA's management of the HWAP program.