



AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROGRAM GROWS TO \$950 MILLION IN NEW FEDERAL BUDGET

*HOME Investment Partnership program has been key source of
funding for programs of the San Diego Housing Commission & City of San Diego*

San Diego, CA — The federal HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME), which helps finance affordable housing projects throughout the nation, including a growing number of developments in the city of San Diego, was allocated \$950 million in the revised budget bill for the 2015-16 fiscal year that President Barack Obama signed on December 18.

The budget also bolstered Moving to Work, a program of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), by extending its current agreements with local housing authorities by 10 years to 2028, under existing terms and conditions without any disruptions.

“That is very good news for San Diego,” said Richard C. Gentry, president and CEO of the San Diego Housing Commission (SDHC), who garnered support for the two HUD programs from local legislators. “Both programs have been crucial to efforts to fight homelessness and create more affordable housing here.”

U.S. Senators Dianne Feinstein and Barbara Boxer took a particularly active role in extending the MTW program, [writing HUD Secretary Julián Castro](#) that the extension would ensure that MTW agencies could “retain their current flexibility to expand affordable housing opportunities.”

Since 1992, [SDHC has administered more than \\$186 million in HOME funds](#) awarded by HUD to the City of San Diego. These funds have been used to create 1,785 affordable rental housing units, assist 1,891 first-time homebuyers, and help 593 homeowners rehabilitate their properties.

In the past year alone, SDHC administered more than \$22.4 million in HOME funds for affordable housing developments, including:

- \$2.85 million invested in the creation of 62 permanent supportive housing studios at Cypress Apartments. This affordable housing development is slated to open in 2016 as part of [HOUSING FIRST-SAN DIEGO](#), SDHC’s landmark three-year Homelessness Action Plan that will impact the lives of as many 1,500 homeless San Diegans.
- \$2.6 million invested in the creation of 59 permanent supportive housing studios at Talmadge Gateway, an affordable housing development scheduled to open in 2017 as part of HOUSING FIRST-SAN DIEGO.
- \$2 million invested in [Mesa Commons](#), which opened in May with 77 affordable apartments, including affordable units for families earning between 30-45 percent of the region’s median income.

Funding for HOME came under threat earlier this year, when the Senate’s initial version of the budget reduced the program from the \$1.05 billion requested by President Obama to just \$66 million. In a letter to local legislators last summer, SDHC CEO Gentry warned that the cuts would “virtually eliminate” the program.

But with the help of Senators Feinstein and Boxer and Representatives Susan Davis, Juan Vargas and Scott Peters, the funding was restored to \$950 million - \$50 million more than had been budgeted the previous year. U.S. Representatives Davis, Vargas and Peters helped ensure that the extension of the MTW program was included in the final version of the bill.

SDHC most recent investments of MTW funds include:

- **Renovating Hotel Churchill:** \$9.2 million in MTW funds and \$2.9 million in HOME funds were invested to renovate the historical [Hotel Churchill](#) in Downtown San Diego. When it opens in June, Hotel Churchill will include 72 permanent affordable housing studios, mostly for homeless Veterans or youths aging out of foster care.
- **Maintaining Affordable Senior Housing:** SDHC invested \$15 million in MTW funds to purchase [Village North Senior Garden Apartments](#) in Clairemont Mesa, reserving 20 percent of its 120 units as permanent supportive housing for homeless seniors.
- **Encouraging Self-Reliance:** SDHC has used MTW funds to enhance the Family Self-Sufficiency program at [SDHC’s Achievement Academy](#), a state-of-the-art learning center and computer lab. The program is a voluntary two-year course that provides job training, career planning, and financial literacy education, such as budgeting, saving, establishing good credit, and income tax preparation. The course is available free of charge to the head of household receiving SDHC federal Housing Choice Vouchers (Section 8).

For more information about the San Diego Housing Commission, visit www.sdhc.org.

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