



**Oregon**  
Theodore R. Kulongoski, Governor



**Housing and Community Services**

North Mall Office Building  
725 Summer Street NE, Suite B  
Salem, OR 97301-1266  
(503) 986-2000



FAX (503) 986-2020  
TTY (503) 986-2100  
[www.ohcs.oregon.gov](http://www.ohcs.oregon.gov)

## **For Immediate Release**

May 4, 2010

Contact: Lisa Joyce, 503.986.0951, [lisa.joyce@state.or.us](mailto:lisa.joyce@state.or.us)

Mike Kaplan, 503.986.2079, [mike.kaplan@state.or.us](mailto:mike.kaplan@state.or.us)

### **Oregon Housing Agency Requests Homeowner Input on Foreclosure Prevention Strategies**

SALEM – Oregon Housing and Community Services (OHCS) will hold a series of forums throughout the state to listen to Oregonians describe the challenges they face as homeowners in this challenging economic environment. These forums are meant to ensure that those most in need have an opportunity to help shape a new federally funded program intended to assist them to prevent foreclosure.

"We want to create an effective program that helps people stay in their homes," said Victor Merced, Director of Oregon Housing and Community Services. "To do that, it is important that we hear directly from those affected by the housing crisis."

The Obama Administration announced recently that Oregon will receive as much as \$88 million to support innovative measures to help families stay in their homes, avoid foreclosure, and stabilize the housing market. Oregon is in the second round of states to receive an allocation of the "Hardest Hit Fund" from the U.S. Treasury Department. Second round funds were awarded to states that had high concentrations of people living within counties where the unemployment rate exceeded 12 percent in 2009.

Oregon had 16 such counties: Columbia, Coos, Crook, Curry, Deschutes, Douglas, Grant, Harney, Jackson, Jefferson, Josephine, Klamath, Lake, Lane, Linn and Wallowa counties.

Working on a short timeline, OHCS must submit a design and management proposal to the U.S. Treasury by June 1.

The monies can be used for a variety of approaches that will help curb housing problems. Such programs might include:

- **Mortgage Subsidy Assistance:** providing resources to qualified homeowners to help pay a portion of their mortgage during a period of unemployment.
- **Mortgage Modification Assistance:** offering a small amount of additional funds to enable homeowners to qualify for existing federal mortgage modification programs.
- **Down Payment Assistance:** helping qualified homebuyers to buy a home, which would help decrease available housing stock and restore value to housing markets.
- **Mortgage Principal Reduction:** helping homeowners who are behind on their mortgages and owe more than their homes are now worth to reduce the size of their loans to match their home's current value.

OHCS has been working with the Oregon Department of Consumer and Business Services, the Oregon Department of Justice, the Oregon Employment Department, the lending industry and consumer advocates to identify the needs of Oregon families and to learn from the activities of other states that received first round funding.

"We know mortgage loan modifications have been challenging for many Oregonians," said Cory Streisinger, Department of Consumer and Business Services director. "We look forward to hearing directly from homeowners about the difficulties they are facing, to help us figure out how to best use this funding."

The forums will occur at the following times and places:

**Monday, May 10, 2010**

**6 p.m. to 8 p.m.**

**Higher Education Center, HEC 127/129**

**101 South Bartlett, Medford, OR**

**Tuesday, May 11, 2010**

**6 p.m. to 8 p.m.**

**University of Oregon, Baker Downtown Center, Rooms 130 and 132**

**975 High Street, Suite 110, Eugene, OR**

**Thursday, May 13, 2010**

**6 p.m. to 8 p.m.**

**Bend Community Center, Community Hall**

**1036 NE 5th, Bend, OR**

**Wednesday, May 19, 2010**

**6 p.m. to 8 p.m.**

**Memorial Coliseum, US Plywood Room**

**300 North Winning Way, Portland, OR**

After OHCS receives feedback, the agency will draft a proposal for the Treasury Department. The department expects to begin implementation of its proposal in late summer or early fall.

For more information on the Oregon Homeownership Stabilization Program, go to <http://go.usa.gov/i7B>.

Oregon Housing and Community Services is the state's housing finance agency and community services program administrator. The department provides financial and program support to create and preserve opportunities for quality, affordable housing serving Oregonians of lower and moderate income, and administers federal and state antipoverty, homelessness prevention and intervention, energy assistance and community service programs. Go to: <http://www.ohcs.oregon.gov>

###