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Governor is to be lauded for rental aid program

The Delaware Housing Coalition thanks The News Journal editorial board for its May 6 support of increased funding to the new State Rental Assistance Program. This program has been needed for a long time, and it is a credit to the leadership of Gov. Jack Markell that he has initiated it now. SRAP will coordinate three state agencies to bring forward and fund a housing voucher program providing choice and independence.

Gov. Markell's initiative meets this essential housing need for many different populations, including children aging out of foster care, the chronically homeless and people moving out of state institutions such as the state psychiatric center. DHC fully supports this innovative and cost-effective solution to a persistent problem that cried out for a localized solution.

With the economic outlook very grim not so many months ago, finding funding for a new and essential program was not easy. The positive change in the state revenue outlook prompted DHC and advocates to make the case now for fully funding the agency's original request of \$3 million.

The governor has been a creative and effective champion of meeting housing needs of Delaware's poorest and neediest – even when resources were much more limited – and deserves our thanks for his attention to those whose voices are often not heard.

Ken Smith, executive director, Delaware Housing Coalition, Dover
