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the agency could finalize how to respond to the results of the testing.

“This is a startling setback, not only because the individuals who are currently receiving assistance through FEMA’s trailer program face an unknown threat from formaldehyde exposure, but also because FEMA has made additional changes to its disaster housing programs in lieu of the impending analysis and testing by CDC,” the Senators wrote.

“The failure of FEMA to test these trailers and to come up with substantive data on the potential health effects on 2005 hurricane season survivors is having a dramatic impact, not only on the individuals working so hard to rebuild their lives through this long recovery process, but also on the nation’s ability to respond to housing needs during future disasters or catastrophes,” the letter states.

Senators Landrieu and Stevens asked Administrator Paulison to provide by December 17 the date when FEMA will resume testing the trailers and the agency’s plans to remove Gulf Coast residents from unsafe trailers. The Senators also ask for information on the agency’s plan to release its National Disaster Housing Strategy, overdue to Congress since July.

The letter can be found here: www.nlihc.org/doc/Formaldehyde_testing_letter.pdf.

FROM THE FIELD

Delaware Organizations Hold Annual Meeting to Promote Affordable Housing

NLIHC state partner, the Delaware Housing Coalition (DHC), and the Diamond State Community Land Trust (CLT), an independent organization that began as a project of DHC, held joint annual meetings on November 30 in Dover, DE. Eighty members participated in the event themed “Affordable, Once and for All!”

Mike Brown of Burlington Associates in Community Development, which provides technical assistance to community land trusts (CLTs) throughout the county, gave the keynote address. He discussed the increasing popularity and practicality of this tool. CLTs are being used to create and perpetuate affordable housing by local governments, as well as nonprofits. A panel discussion with representatives from Delaware counties followed. Panelists spoke about current efforts to incorporate affordable housing into their comprehensive plans.

“The growth of the CLT movement in Delaware, as an outgrowth of our efforts, is very heartening, as is the gathering of our membership in support of the work on housing needs of Delaware’s most vulnerable citizens and to re-commit to make progress together,” Ken Smith, Executive Director of DHC said.

Rosalind Kotz, a doctoral student with the Center for Research and Service of the University of Delaware, introduced the findings of her research, which was commissioned by DHC. The study, entitled Housing Needs of Extremely Low Income Households in Delaware, reports an estimate of 27,836 extremely low income (ELI) households in Delaware in need of affordable housing due to the lack of affordability of their units and or lack of income. The report can be found here: www.udel.edu/ccrs/knowledge.html

“The research clearly shows that the affordable housing problem in Delaware is almost entirely a problem faced by extremely low income renter and owner households,” Ms. Kotz said. “Middle and upper income households are feeling the pinch of housing cost escalation, but for the most part they can afford the housing. Extremely low income households are getting more and more cost burdened over time and most are paying over half their income on housing. Due to the extremely low incomes of these households, we can conclude that this cannot be isolated as a housing issue, but one that will take the joint efforts of housing, welfare and workforce development interests to address.”

The meeting also provided a preview of state-level housing related legislation. DHC is recommending an allocation of \$20 million for affordable housing in next year’s state budget.

The day concluded with a legislative luncheon, where Delaware Senator Nancy Cook was recognized for increasing affordable housing funding for the current fiscal year to \$12.5 million.

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NLIHC NEWS

Dolbeare Media Awards New Rules to Expand Eligibility

The 2nd Annual Cushing Niles Dolbeare Media Awards includes several new features that NLIHC would like to highlight.

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