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8/31/2021

To: Members of the Common Council of the City of Madison  
From: Brad Paul, Executive Director, WISCAP  
Re: Administration of CORE 2.0

Madison Alders:

I am writing to urge your support of the Finance Committee's recommendation (8/9/21) of the Community Action Coalition for South Central Wisconsin's (CAC) application to partner with the City of Madison in its implementation of CORE 2.0, a federally funded program to provide emergency rental assistance.

The Community Action Coalition was formed in 1966 as a direct expression of the War on Poverty. Created by the Office of Economic Opportunity, community action agencies were designed to empower low-income communities with economic support while being governed by a tripartite board structure representing public, private, and low-income interests in the community. This important work continues and is especially critically given the COVID-19 pandemic's impacts on low-income families and households.

Over its long history, CAC has deep experience in managing federal grant programs, including the state's Wisconsin Rental Assistance Program (WRAP), made possible by Governor Evers through the federal CARES Act. Under this program, CAC was able to distribute over \$3,000,000 in rental assistance funds between June 8th and November 24, 2020. Under this contract with the state, and as part of the statewide effort coordinated by the Wisconsin Community Action Program Association (WISCAP), CAC developed the program application, trained staff, created internal policies and procedures, and launched the program on short notice. Within the first 24 hours of a pre-application, CAC received 1,500 applications and processed more than 7,350 applications over the course of the program.

In addition to its demonstrated ability to distribute emergency rent, CACSCW is uniquely familiar with the full range of programmatic and administrative considerations required to successfully implement a complex program such as CORE 2. For example, under WRAP, CAC routinely identified and responded to a host of critical and related case management and supportive services for renter households; supports that linked and ensured rental assistance as part of a larger housing and economic security strategy. CAC maintains the approach, experience, and critical infrastructure which can be applied to the CORE effort.

Finally, as a member agency of WISCAP, CAC stands to directly benefit from WISCAP's coordination with the Department of Administration Division of Energy, Housing and Community Resources (**DEHCR**), the state office charged with contracting and administering federal rental assistance funds. This includes access to significant knowledge and technical assistance resources and participation in WISCAP's ongoing policy and programmatic forums for frontline staff.

Viewed across its anti-poverty, community-based work, CAC routinely demonstrates excellent fiscal management practices, provides a full range of support services for low to moderate income households, enjoys a strong track record of leveraging other funding sources, and, most crucially, possesses immediate experience in administering a federally funded emergency rental assistance program. Taken together, I strongly urge you to support the Finance Committees recommendation of the Community Action Coalition for South Central Wisconsin's application as a partner on Core 2.0.



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