State of Connecticut
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
STATE CAPITOL
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591

To: Senator Toni N. Harp
Representative John C. Geragosian
Co-Chairpersons, Appropriations Committee

Senator Paul R. Doyle
Representative Toni E. Walker
Co-Chairpersons, Human Services Committee

From: Donald E. Williams, Jr., Senate President Pro Tempore
Christopher G. Donovan, Speaker of the House

Re: Community Services Block Grant

Date: August 23, 2010

Pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes Section 4-28b, we are submitting the Governor's allocation plan for the Federal fiscal year 2011 Community Services Block Grant program to you for your approval or modifications.

Thank you for your consideration of these recommendations.

Sincerely,

Donald E. Williams, Jr.
President Pro Tempore

Christopher G. Donovan Senate
Speaker of the House

Cc: Susan Keane, Senior Committee Administrator, Appropriations Committee
Brie Johnston, Clerk, Human Services Committee
Anne Foley, Senior Policy Advisor, Office of Policy and Management

The Community Services Block Grant Allocation Plan

FFY 2011

October 1, 2010 – September 30, 2011

Submitted by:
Commissioner Michael P. Starkowski
Connecticut Department of Social Services
August 2010

The Community Services Block Grant Allocation Plan

FFY 2011

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PAGE

I. Overview of the Community Services Block Grant 1

A. Purpose 1

B. Major Use of Funds 2

C. Federal Allotment Process 2

D. Estimated Federal Funding 3

E. Estimated Expenditures and Proposed Allocations 3

F. Proposed Allocation Changes From Last Year 3

G. Contingency Plan 3

H. State Allocation Planning Process 3

I. Grant Provisions 4

II. Tables 6

A. Summary of Appropriations and Expenditures 7

B. Summary of Program Expenditures 8

C. Summary of Service Objectives and Activities 9

III. Allocations by Program Category 10

THE COMMUNITY SERVICES BLOCK GRANT ALLOCATION PLAN
FFY 2011
October 1, 2010 – September 30, 2011

I. OVERVIEW OF THE COMMUNITY SERVICES BLOCK GRANT

A. Purpose

The Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) is administered by the United States Department of Health and Human Services through its administrative agency, the Administration for Children and Families, Office of Community Services. The Connecticut Department of Social Services (DSS) is designated as the principal state agency for the allocation and administration of the block grant within the state of Connecticut.

The purposes of the Community Services Block Grant are:

1. To provide assistance to states and local communities, working through a network of community action agencies for the reduction of poverty, the revitalization of low-income communities, and the empowerment of low-income families and individuals to become fully self-sufficient (particularly families who are attempting to transition off a state program carried out under part A of the Social Security Act (42 USC 601, et. Seq.)); and

2. To accomplish the goals described in paragraph (1) through:

   a) the strengthening of community capabilities for planning and coordinating a broad range of federal, state, local and private resources related to the elimination of poverty, so that these resources can be used in a manner responsive to local needs and conditions;

   b) the coordination of a range of services to meet the needs of low-income families and individuals, so that these services have a measurable impact on the reduction of poverty in the community and in helping families and individuals to achieve self-sufficiency;

   c) the promotion of innovative and effective community-based approaches to addressing the causes and effects of poverty and community breakdown;

   d) the promotion of participation by the low-income residents and members of the groups served by programs funded through block grants made under this subtitle in planning and coordinating activities and programs designed to respond to the unique problems and needs within their communities; and

e) the broadening of the resource base for programs directed at the elimination of poverty so as to secure a more active role in the provision of services for:

(1) Private religious, charitable, and neighborhood-based organizations; and

(2) Individual citizens, business, labor, and professional groups, who are able to influence the quantity and quality of opportunities and services for the poor.

B. Major Use of Funds

As federally mandated, at least ninety percent (90%) of the funds made available to the state must be used to make grants to Community Action Agencies (CAAs), Community Action Programs (CAPs) or Limited Purpose Agencies (LPAs) that performed the functions of a Community Action Agency in fiscal year 1981, or their successors. These funds must be used for purposes consistent with the federal goals identified above.

There are currently twelve CAAs and one LPA that qualify for CSBG funding in Connecticut. Each CAA has a specified service area. In Connecticut, CSBG funds are primarily used by CAAs to provide planning and coordination, organize services, encourage innovative and effective approaches to addressing the causes of poverty, broadening the resource base for programs and services, and for core administrative expenses. With CSBG as base funding, CAAs operate a wide range of programs with other funds from DSS (including, but not limited to, Energy Assistance, Weatherization, and Child Day Care), other state agencies, federal agencies and municipalities, as well as private donations.

CAAs also prepare annual Community Action Plans, as required under the Act, which address how the goals of the block grant will be furthered by the efforts of the entire Community Action Agency, rather than just those programs funded directly or indirectly by CSBG. CSBG funds must be used to serve or improve the well being of individuals with incomes at or below 125% of the federal poverty level. CSBG funds may not be used to support political activities or to pay for construction unless a specific waiver is obtained by the state from the federal government.

The state is permitted to retain up to five percent (5%) of the Block Grant for administration, and may use the remainder of the funds allocated for a variety of purposes including, but not limited to, training, technical assistance and capacity building for eligible entities, and innovative programs that further the purposes of the Act.

C. Federal Allotment Process

CSBG funds are allotted based on the national appropriation and the states' share of funds distributed under Sec. 221 of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 for federal fiscal year 1981.

D. Estimated Federal Funding

For purposes of this plan, the federal funding allocation for Connecticut for FFY 2011 is estimated to be $8,393,383, which is equal to the state's final FFY 2010 allocation.

E. Estimated Expenditures and Proposed Allocations

Provisions of Section 210 of the federal Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 include requirements that at least ninety percent (90%) of the funds made available to the state must be used to make grants to CAAs or LPAs. Accordingly, the state proposes approximately ninety percent (90%) or $7,554,045 of the 2011 block grant be granted to CAAs and LPAs in Connecticut. The state plans to retain approximately five percent (5%) of the FFY 2011 funds or $419,669 for administration. The balance of the allocation, $419,669 (5%) will be used for discretionary projects that may include training, technical assistance, technology support, statewide projects and innovative programs related to the purposes of the Act. Carry forward of any previous year CSBG funds (currently estimated at $537,287) will be utilized in Grants to Eligible Entities. The distribution of funds to eligible entities is based on a formula referenced in Sec. 17b-888 of the Connecticut General Statutes and further described in Section H below.

F. Proposed Allocation Changes From Last Year

Block grant regulations specify how funds will be allocated and, as such, the Department does not propose any significant changes in the allocation plan for FFY 2011.

G. Contingency Plan

This allocation plan has been prepared under the assumption that the FFY 2011 Community Services Block Grant for Connecticut will be funded at the level of $8,393,383. In the event that anticipated funding is either increased or reduced, federal law, as noted above, specifies the proportion of funds allocated to Community Action Agencies, Discretionary Programs and Administration.

H. State Allocation Planning Process

Sections 17b-885 through 17b-895 of the Connecticut General Statutes reflect the federal requirements and further stipulate that funds be distributed through an agreement negotiated between the Department and Community Action Agencies. Under the present agreement, negotiated and implemented in 1997, each CAA will receive a base amount that equals one-half of their FFY 1996 allocation. Remaining funds are allocated to CAAs based on the number of individuals in each CAA service area (as a proportion of the state total) at or below 125% of the federal poverty guideline according to census data.

I. Grant Provisions

In order to obtain CSBG funding, Connecticut must submit and obtain federal approval of the state plan that satisfies the requirements of Sec. 676 of the Reauthorization Act. Under these requirements, the state must:

- designate a state agency to serve as lead agency;
- hold a public hearing to provide the public an opportunity to comment on the proposed use of funds;
- conduct monitoring in accordance with Section 678B of the Reauthorization Act;
- hold a legislative hearing at least once every three (3) years in conjunction with the development of the state plan;
- use funds received to support activities which assist low-income families and individuals to:

    1. achieve self-sufficiency;
    2. secure and retain meaningful employment;
    3. attain an adequate education;
    4. make better use of available income;
    5. obtain and maintain adequate housing;
    6. obtain emergency assistance; and
    7. achieve greater participation in the affairs of the community;

- address the needs of youth in low-income communities;
- assure that CSBG funds are used to coordinate with and make more effective use of other programs with related purposes;
- describe how it uses its discretionary funds;
- include information provided by eligible entities on how CSBG funds will be used;
- assure that eligible entities provide emergency food, supplies and related services to combat hunger and malnutrition;
- assure that the state and eligible entities coordinate with and establish linkages between governmental and other programs to avoid duplication;
- provide for coordination between programs to ensure that energy crisis intervention programs are conducted in each community;

- assure that the state will cooperate with related federal investigations;
- assure that funding for eligible entities will not be terminated or reduced below their proportional share without cause;
- provide opportunities for state and eligible entities to form partnerships with other organizations, including religious, charitable and community organizations;
- establish mechanisms for low-income individuals or organizations that feel they are under-represented on the board of a CAA to petition for representation;
- require that each CAA submit a Community Action Plan as a condition of funding;
- require that all eligible entities participate in the Results Oriented Management and Accountability system; and
- require that each eligible entity have a Board of Directors composed of equal numbers of low-income persons, local elected officials or their designees, and other individuals or organizations serving low-income people in the community.

Connecticut's most recent federal CSBG plan was approved for the period October 1, 2008 to September 30, 2010. A federal CSBG plan for the period October 1, 2010 to September 30, 2012 is in preparation for submission by September 1, 2010.

II. Tables

TABLE # and TITLE		PAGE #
Table A	Summary of Appropriations and Expenditures	7
Table B	Summary of Program Expenditures	8
Table C	Summary of Service Objectives and Activities	9

Table A

COMMUNITY SERVICES BLOCK GRANT

SUMMARY OF APPROPRIATIONS AND EXPENDITURES

PROGRAM CATEGORY	FFY '09 Expenditure	FFY '10 Estimated Expenditure	FFY '11 Proposed Expenditure
Grants to Eligible Entities	$7,158,108	$8,283,259	$8,091,332
Discretionary Programs	197,413	573,010	419,669
Administration	242,719	233,565	419,669
TOTAL	**$7,598,240**	**$9,089,834**	**$8,930,670**
SOURCE OF FUNDS			
Block Grant	$8,393,383	$8,393,383	$8,393,383
Carry Forward from Previous Year	438,595	1,233,738	537,287
TOTAL FUNDS AVAILABLE	**$8,831,978**	**9,627,121**	**$8,930,670**

Table B

COMMUNITY SERVICES BLOCK GRANT

SUMMARY OF PROGRAM EXPENDITURES

	FFY '09 Expenditure	FFY '10 Estimated Expenditure	FFY '11 Proposed Expenditure
Number of Positions (FTE)	1.4	1.4	2.45
Personal Services	$128,967	$132,269	$203,578
Fringe Benefits	$70,013	$57,468	$120,355
Other Expenses	$43,739	$43,828	$95,736
Equipment			
Contracts			
Grants to:			
Local Government			
Other State Agencies			
Private agencies	7,355,521	$8,856,269	$8,511,001
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	**$7,598,240**	**$9,089,834**	**$8,930,670**
	Sources of FFY '09 Allocations	**Sources of FFY '10 Allocations**	**Sources of FFY '11 Allocations**
Carry Forward from Previous Year	$438,595	$1,233,738	$537,287
Federal Block Grant Funds	8,393,383	8,393,383	8,393,383
TOTAL SOURCES OF FUNDS	**$8,831,978**	**$9,627,121**	**$8,930,670**

Table C

COMMUNITY SERVICES BLOCK GRANT

SUMMARY OF SERVICE OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Service Category	Objective	Service/Activity	Number Serviced FFY 09
Core Funding for Eligible Entities	Provide core administrative support for CAAs to organize services and coordinate funding for programs that serve individuals and families at or below 125% of the federal poverty level.	Provide planning, administrative and financial management support to Community Action Agencies to coordinate grants and services to low-income residents.	387,324 persons served through 12 CAAs in FFY 09*.

* As reported in Part I, Section G, Lines 3 and 4 of the annual federal CSBG MIS report for 2009. This number reflects an almost 32% increase from 2008 in the number of individuals served by the state's community action agencies.

III. ALLOCATIONS BY PROGRAM CATEGORY

COMMUNITY SERVICES BLOCK GRANT
FFY 10 ESTIMATED EXPENDITURES AND FFY 11 PROPOSED EXPENDITURES

Major Program Categories	FFY 2010 Estimated Expenditures (including carry forward funds)	FFY 2011 Proposed Expenditures (including carry forward funds)
Grants to Eligible Entities		
Action for Bridgeport Community Development, Inc. (ABCD)	$ 959,998	$ 938,346
ACCESS Agency, Inc.	$ 498,128	$ 486,211
Bristol Community Organization, Inc. (BCO)	$ 213,233	$ 208,545
Community Action Agency of New Haven, Inc. (CAANH)	$1,194,626	$1,168,005
Community Action for Committee of Danbury, Inc. (CACD)	$ 329,382	$ 321,433
Community Renewal Team of Greater Hartford, Inc. (CRT)	$1,981,934	$1,934,779
CTE, Inc.	$ 409,557	$ 400,650
Human Resource Agency of New Britain, Inc. (HRANB)	$ 351,278	$ 343,383
Norwalk Economic Opportunity Now, Inc. (NEON)	$ 249,996	$ 244,198
New Opportunities, Inc. (NO)	$1,114,835	$1,088,410
TEAM, Inc.	$ 242,771	$ 237,291
Thames Valley Council for Community Action, Inc. (TVCCA)	$ 497,309	$ 485,435
Connecticut Association for Community Action, Inc. (CAFCA)	$ 240,215	$ 234,649
Formula Allocations – *Total*	***8,283,259***	***8,091,332***
Discretionary Programs	573,010	419,669
State Agency Administration	233,565	419,669
TOTAL CSBG	**$9,089,834**	**$8,930,670**