



101 Constitution Avenue, NW, Suite 600 West, Washington, DC 20001

Arizona State University

March 30, 2009

California State University –
13 Member Schools

The Hon. Patty Murray
Chairman
Subcommittee Trans., HUD
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate

The Hon. Christopher Bond
Ranking Member
Subcommittee Trans., HUD
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate

City University of New York –
City College

133 Dirksen
Washington, DC 20510

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Washington, DC 20510

Florida International University

Georgia State University

Indiana University-Purdue
University Indianapolis

Morgan State University

Dear Chairman Murray and Ranking Member Bond:

North Carolina State University

Ohio State University

Portland State University

Temple University

Tennessee State University

On behalf of the Coalition of Urban Serving Universities (USU), we urge you to fund the Community Outreach Partnerships Centers (COPC) program at the Department of Housing and Urban Development for fiscal year 2010. Specifically, funding for this program should be set at no less than its fiscal year 2005 level of \$6.5 million.

University of Akron

University of Central Florida

University of Cincinnati

University of Colorado – Denver

University of Houston

University of Illinois at Chicago

University of Louisville

University of Memphis

University of Minnesota

University of Missouri –
Kansas City

University of New Mexico

University of New Orleans

Virginia Commonwealth
University

Wichita State University

USU is a network of public urban research universities that represents every region of our country. University presidents created USU to leverage the intellectual capital and economic power of urban universities, thereby improving urban life and America's competitiveness in the global economy. To this end, USU is focused on three major issues -- creating a competitive workforce, building strong communities, and improving the health of a diverse population.

As anchors for our nation's cities and greater metro areas, public urban research universities are uniquely positioned with a broad range of skills and resources – intellectual, human, technological, and social – to collaborate with our communities in addressing various urban challenges. USU institutions are making significant investments in community engagement. Our campuses are actively involved in initiatives and projects to improve neighborhoods, increase housing choice and homeownership, foster economic opportunity, and promote commercial development and retail activity in their communities.

The federal government recognized the important role universities can play within their communities by establishing the COPC program in 1992. Since its conception, more than 180 colleges and universities (over three-fourths of which are public institutions) received COPC grants. It is the only federal program that has developed a formal and systemic way for institutions of higher education to expand new and existing partnerships to address

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community needs. COPC grants are highly sought after by colleges and universities. There are typically eight times as many applicants as available awards. The program also produces successful outcomes, as it leverages federal dollars on a \$1 to \$4 ratio.

Many of our USU campuses have been recipients of a COPC grant. Although we recognize the tight fiscal climate surrounding the allocation of federal funds, USU strongly encourages you to fund the important COPC program. Through these and similar endeavors to tie public urban research universities with their communities, we will continue to bolster our nation's economic competitiveness and make our cities a better place to live. USU looks forward to continuing to work with you and your colleagues as you finalize an appropriations bill for fiscal year 2010.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Nancy L. Zimpher".

Nancy L. Zimpher
Chair, Coalition of Urban Serving Universities
President, University of Cincinnati