LEAGUE OF CALIFORNIA CITIES
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LEAGUE OF CALIFORNIA CITIES OPPOSES PROPOSED SHOTGUN "LOAN" OF CITY FUNDS TO BAIL OUT THE STATE BUDGET

Proposal is Reckless and Threatens Californians' Public Safety

Just as mayors and city councils statewide slash city budgets and reduce services to deal with the worst economic crisis in decades, they learned Thursday that state leaders may try to coerce local governments into providing a forced $2 billion bailout of the state budget if the May 19 ballot measures fail. The May Revise option released by Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger on Thursday, May 14, containing that bailout, or "loan," essentially forces cities to rescue the state from its financial quagmire and would cripple city services. To take money from cash-strapped cities now amounts to a profound "anti-stimulus" action by the state. *For more, see Page 2.*

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SUMMARY OF MAY BUDGET REVISE PROPOSALS

The League has examined both of the May Budget Revise proposals released by Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger on Thursday, May 14. The proposals are contingent on the outcome of the May 19 special election. Originally scheduled for release May 28, the Governor moved up the May Revise to May 14 because he wanted voters to understand the dire choices facing the state budget. *For more, see Page 3.*

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GOVERNOR CALLED URGENT MEETINGS WITH CITY OFFICIALS TO DISCUSS IMPACT OF BORROWING

Earlier this week, Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger held roundtable meetings with approximately 50 city officials to discuss Propositions 1A-F and the impact of their failure on state and local services. League President and Rolling Hills Estates Mayor Judy Mitchell joined the Governor at the meeting he held on Monday in Culver City. Tuesday, the Governor held a meeting in San Jose which included Campbell Council Member Dan Furtado and Brisbane Mayor Sepi Richardson. (See the full list of who attended below.) Chris McKenzie, League executive director, also participated in both meetings. The League endorsed the May 19 special election ballot propositions on April 6 to help prevent a deeper state fiscal crisis and to enact some long-term state budget reforms. *For more, see Page 4.*

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Yesterday, the Governor said he absolutely "despised the proposal." He also said earlier this week in a meeting with mayors and council members that he understands this proposal would be devastating to public safety services and that he did not know how the state would pay back the loan. Statewide opinion polls consistently show a vast majority of Californians themselves don't believe borrowing should be used to balance the state's budget and oppose public safety cuts.

California cities cannot afford to bail out the state when they are already adopting extremely painful cuts to balance their own budgets. This shotgun "loan" of city property tax revenues would force additional service cuts including police and firefighter layoffs and result in longer emergency response times and fire station closures.

Here is a small snapshot of what some of California's cities are facing:

- **Los Angeles** is facing a $529 million budget deficit and Mayor Villaraigosa has urged the city council to declare a fiscal emergency to give him authority to layoff and furlough thousands of city employees;
- **Rohnert Park** may have to lay off 31 employees, including 17 sworn police officers and nine public safety technicians — and would still not be able to balance its budget;
- **Stockton**, to address a $31 million budget deficit, sent layoff notices to 55 police officers, 35 civilian employees and demoted seven officers; and
- **Vallejo**, facing bankruptcy, may be forced to decimate city services by 20 percent and staff are recommending that the city council cut 30 sworn officer positions as well as close two fire stations;

"It's absolutely unthinkable that the state would consider sacrificing local public safety at a time like this. City officials are already making painful cuts locally, laying off employees, cutting services and much more, to make our budgets balance. Taking local funds used for public safety to bail out the state budget is the last thing the public wants to see," said League President and Rolling Hills Estates Mayor Judy Mitchell.

"It's painful. We're going well below our ability to provide essential services. We have nothing left to cut," said Vallejo city Council Member Stephanie Gomes.

Reflecting the impact that the stagnating economy has had on city budgets, cities across the state are passing resolutions declaring a state of severe fiscal hardship. To date, close to 100 cities have either passed or are scheduled to pass a resolution.

California's news leaders understand why it's fundamentally wrong for the state to raid local revenues. Writing in an op-ed in the Los Angeles Times on May 14, D.J. Waldie, a contributing editor, expressed it poignantly stating: "The quality of life in California's neighborhoods will be part of the wreckage. Closed libraries mean kids won't have a place to go after school. Unsupervised parks means they won't have a safe place to play. Furloughed workers won't be available to process your business license, check your building plans or deal with your complaint. Everyday life — the level at which local government works —- will be harder and coarser."

During the meeting the Governor held with city officials earlier this week, he told the assembled city officials that he will be under extraordinary pressure to "borrow" local government funds if the ballot measures fail and the budget deficit reaches $21.3 billion. The League and the city officials present told the Governor that they strongly opposed any borrowing on top of the $900 million cities already provide the state each year in city property taxes. The League endorsed the propositions on April 6.

"The League is supporting Props. 1A - F because they provide a framework for beginning to responsibly balance the state budget without gimmicks. The state should follow the lead of the cities of California in dealing with its budget deficit — cut spending, sell assets, enhance revenues and don't borrow," said League Executive Director Chris McKenzie.

City officials will fight any budget proposal that attempts to raid local property tax revenues to bail out the state budget.

'May Revise' Continued from Page 1…

The Governor stated that if the voters approve the six measures—placed on the ballot by the legislature and Governor as part of the February budget agreement—the state will have a $15.4 billion deficit to resolve; however, if those measures are rejected the deficit swells to $21.3 billion. If the propositions fail, the Governor proposes to borrow $2 billion in local property taxes to help close the deficit.

Below is a summary of the major provisions of the May Revise:

Proposal #1 (*if ballot measures are <u>approved</u> by voters*): A projected $15.4 billion state budget deficit would be resolved through a variety of cuts, program consolidation and borrowing.

Programs with city impacts:

- $34.7 in state savings by deleting reimbursement for Williamson Act subventions;
- $40.1 million in state savings gained by charging fees to employers for Department of Industrial Relations programs; and
- $336 million in "spillover" gas tax revenues are dedicated to transit bond debt service. An explanation of the "spillover" is posted online at www.californiacityfinance.com/SpilloverFAQ.pdf.

Other major budget components include:

- $6 billion in borrowing from state-issued revenue anticipation warrants (RAW);
- $3 billion reduction to K-14 schools, during FY 2008-09 and FY 2009-10;
- $1 billion reduction to CSU and UC funding in FY2008-09;
- $1 billion derived from the partial sale of the State Compensation Insurance Fund;
- $750 million in proposed Medi-Cal changes which require federal waivers;
- $610 million in revenue accelerations from income tax estimated payments;
- $245 million in cuts to social service and health programs to immigrants;
- $248.5 million in savings by reducing state grant funding for aged and disabled;
- $192 million in cuts and anti-fraud efforts to in home supportive service programs (IHSS);
- $179.7 million in reductions and anti-fraud efforts to various Medi-Cal programs;
- $156.7 million in savings from changes to CalWorks (welfare);
- $132 million in savings by shifting to lower cost health care programs. Additional savings are gained by requiring 25 years of service for new state employees before eligibility commences for lifetime health benefits;
- $100 million in revenue from an oil and gas lease off the Santa Barbara coast;
- $50 million in savings from consolidating state departments and programs, including tax collection, energy and waste management; and
- Additional savings from laying-off 5,000 state workers from positions funded through the General Fund.

Proposal #2 (*if ballot measures are <u>rejected</u> by voters*): A projected $21.3 billion state budget deficit would be resolved through these additional measures:

Programs with city impacts:

- **$1.982 billion in borrowing property taxes from local government under Proposition 1A of 2004.** A joint powers agency is also proposed to allow local agencies to borrow as a group against the state's repayment. Under this proposal the proposed $6 billion RAW (above) would be reduced by $500 million; and
- $76 million from a new 4.8 percent surcharge on insurance policies to partially fund CAL Fire and local response agencies. Local agencies can receive reimbursement for costs incurred for responding to emergencies as part of the state's mutual aid system.

Other major budget components include:

- $2.3 billion in additional cuts to K-14 school programs;

- $1.7 billion in revenue acceleration achieved by increasing income tax withholding in the FY 2009-10 by 10 percent;
- $301.5 million in additional IHSS cost containment;
- $182 million would be saved by deporting undocumented immigrants housed in California prisons;
- $150 million in additional cuts to CSU and UC;
- $138.9 in cuts to HIV awareness, domestic violence, child welfare and health programs;
- $108 million in savings by eliminating Prop. 36, substance abuse treatment funding;
- $99 million is savings by changing sentencing options so that lower-level offenders serve time in local jails rather than state prison; and
- $82.9 million achieved in cuts to Healthy Families, Medi-Cal and other programs.
- $0.5 million gained from increasing state park fees.

Please visit the Department of Finance's Web site at www.dof.ca.gov to access a copy of the May Budget Revise.

May 19 Special Election

On May 19, six measures are before the voters:

- Prop. 1A: Strengthens state reserve funds, limits excessive state spending.
- Prop. 1B: Repays schools $9.3 billion over time.
- Prop. 1C: Modernizes the state lottery, allows state to securitize $5 billion for budget.
- Prop. 1D: Redirects over $1 billion in tobacco tax proceeds for state budget.
- Prop. 1E: Redirects $460 million from Prop. 63 mental health tax for budget.
- Prop. 1F: Prohibits salary increases for elected state officials during budget deficit.

Other legislation approved by the Legislature contains provisions that provide authority for the Governor to enact mid-year budget cuts and extend the duration of various tax increases contingent upon the approval of Prop. 1A.

Additional Context

City officials reviewing this proposal should consider the following:

1. Borrowing local property taxes must be strongly opposed;
2. The direct impact on cities of the remainder of these proposals is minimal. There are no proposed takeaways of Props. 42 (sales tax on gas) revenues or redevelopment funds, nor deferrals of local Highway Users Taxes;
3. These are the Governor's proposals and the legislature may not agree with many of them. The legislature will advance other proposals which could be beneficial or harmful to local government;
4. Much can change with the outcome of the May 19 special election if some of the measures pass;
5. The state faces a major cash flow crisis this summer and the May Revise is silent on infrastructure bond allocation, economic stimulus and other matters. It is likely, therefore, that additional proposals will emerge following the election; and
6. As part of the February budget agreement, the legislature approved the FY 2009-10 budget, so technically, the state already has an adopted budget that meets the July 1, Constitutional deadline. However, the adopted budget is not balanced. How this will affect the timing of legislative action is unknown.

Take Action: The League is launching Save Your City, an extremely aggressive campaign to protect local revenue in this chaotic budget environment. Cities are passing resolutions, sending letters, forming coalitions and making phone calls. It is imperative that city officials work with their League regional public affairs managers and take action to protect their revenues. Make plans to attend the League's Budget Action Day scheduled for June 3 in Sacramento.

'Meeting' Continued from Page 1…

City officials asked the Governor about the Department of Finance budget option put forth last week which would have the state borrow $2 billion (8 percent) of local property tax revenues to help close the state's budget, telling him of the damaging effects on city services if a state "loan" of local funds occurs.

"A number of city officials told the Governor they understood the state's fiscal plight because they are already making deep budget cuts to core services and any loss of property tax funds to finance the state budget would be crippling," said Chris McKenzie, League executive director.

In his initial statements and response to questions, the Governor made it clear that he adamantly opposes "borrowing" local property taxes even though it was constitutionally permissible under the passage of Prop. 1A in 2004. The Governor also made it clear that he will be under extraordinary pressure to consider it to fill the state budget deficit which is estimated at $15 billion if Props. 1A-F pass and $21.3 billion if the measures fail. He told city officials that he would resist borrowing local government revenues to the end as it would be the last option as far as he is concerned.

The May Budget Revise, which the Governor released Thursday, contained two options. For more on the May Revise please see "Summary of May Budget Revise Proposals."

Visit the Governor's Web site to view the transcript from the roundtable meetings. (http://gov.ca.gov/speech/12296/)

Governor's Roundtable - Culver City

Andrew Weissman, mayor, Culver City
Barry Waite, council member, Lomita
Bill Bogaard, mayor, Pasadena
Bill DeWitt, mayor, South Gate
Bruce Barrows, mayor, Cerritos
Cliff Numark, council member, Torrance
Frank Ferry, mayor, Santa Clarita
Frank Zerunyan, CCCA president and council member, Rolling Hills Estates
Greg Nordbak, council member, Whittier
Jerry Fulwood, city manager, Culver City
Joe Aguilar, mayor, Commerce
Jorge Rifa, city manager, Commerce
Judy Mitchell, League president and mayor, Rolling Hills Estates
Larry Forester, council member, Signal Hill
Larry Nelson, council member, Artesia
Lois Gaston, council member, Duarte
Mario Guerra, mayor, Downey
Micheal O'Leary, council member, Culver City
Owen Newcomer, council member, Whittier
Peter Yao, council member, Claremont
Portia Cohen, mayor, Manhattan Beach
Richard Montgomery, council member, Manhattan Beach
Ron Beilke, council member, Pico Rivera
Stan Carroll, council member, La Habra Heights
Steve Diels, council member, Redondo Beach
Todd Rogers, mayor, Lakewood
Veronica Guardado, mayor, Maywood

Governor's Roundtable – San Jose

Breene Kerr, Town council member, Los Altos Hills
Charles Marsala, council member, Atherton
Chuck Page, mayor, Saratoga
Chuck Reed, mayor, San Jose
Dan Furtado, council member, Campbell
Don Perry, vice mayor, Monte Sereno
Ian Bain, council member, Redwood City
Jamie Matthews, vice mayor, Santa Clara

Jerry Deal, council member, Burlingame
Kathleen King, vice mayor, Saratoga
Lou Becker, council member, Los Altos
Melinda Hamilton, council member, Sunnyvale
Nancy Pyle, council member, San Jose
Omar Ahmed, council member, San Carlos
Orrin Mahoney, mayor, Cupertino
Perry Woodward, council member, Gilroy
Sue Digre, mayor pro tem, Pacifica
Rose Herrera, council member, San Jose
Sepi Richardson, mayor, Brisbane

California Cities Begin Declaring State of Severe Fiscal Hardship
Dozens Expected to Follow Suit in Coming Days

On Monday, May 11, the first of many cities across California declared a state of severe fiscal hardship and opposed a proposal to take local property tax funds to finance the state budget. These actions reflect the impacts that the stagnating economy has had on California's cities due to serious declines in local tax revenues. Across the state, many cities are enacting drastic cuts to their budgets including public safety reductions, employee layoffs, hiring freezes, project delays, program reductions and more.

More than 100 cities have passed or are scheduled to pass a resolution declaring a state of severe fiscal hardship by Tuesday, June 2. Many additional cities will be following suit in the coming weeks as they prepare their FY 2009-10 budget. Cities that have declared or are scheduled to declare a state of severe fiscal hardship include:

Monday, May 11:	Bellflower, Concord, Fort Bragg, Morro Bay, Palo Alto
Tuesday, May 12:	Arroyo Grande, Atascadero, Chula Vista, Claremont, Dinuba, El Cajon, Folsom, Hermosa Beach, Highland, La Mesa, Novato, Salinas, San Marcos, Santa Clarita, Vallejo, Vista
Wednesday, May 13:	Corning, Encinitas, Palm Springs, Santee, Solana Beach, Williams
Thursday, May 14:	Citrus Heights, Tehachapi
Monday, May 18:	Albany, Biggs, Calimesa, Del Mar, Fortuna, Grover Beach, Hollister, Lomita, Los Gatos, Merced, Oakdale, Orland, Petaluma, San Bernardino, Santa Maria, Sonora
Tuesday, May 19:	Coronado, Desert Hot Springs, El Monte, Eureka, Fremont, Lemon Grove, Ione, Loyalton, Mountain View, Poway, Red Bluff, Redding, Redlands, Riverside, Sacramento, San Luis Obispo, Taft, Tulare, Yountville
Wednesday, May 20:	Atherton, Bakersfield, Imperial Beach, Lodi, Los Banos, Sebastopol
Thursday, May 21:	Indian Wells, Rancho Mirage, San Jacinto, Seaside
Tuesday, May 26:	Apple Valley, Banning, Blythe, Hemet, Jackson, Millbrae, Moreno Valley, San Carlos, Temecula, Wheatland, Willows
Wednesday, May 27:	Adelato, Cathedral City, Cloverdale, Covina, Grass Valley, San Anselmo, South San Francisco
Thursday, May 28:	Plymouth
Monday, June 1:	Selma
Tuesday, June 2:	Campbell, Murrieta, Ontario, South Gate, West Covina, Woodland
Wednesday, June 3:	Canyon Lake, Indio, Norco

"These resolutions are a sign of the serious financial strain many cities face as a result of the economic downturn. We can't allow the state to compound the existing crisis facing many cities by taking local property taxes or other revenues," said League President and Rolling Hills Estates Mayor Judy Mitchell.

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger met with city officials Monday in Culver City and Tuesday in San Jose to discuss Propositions 1A-F on the May 19 special election ballot. The Governor outlined the potential dire consequences facing California if the measures are defeated. The League of California Cities endorsed the propositions on April 6 to help prevent a deeper state fiscal crisis and to enact some long-term state budget reforms.

"A number of city officials told the Governor they understood the state's fiscal plight because they are already making deep budget cuts to core services and any loss of property tax funds to finance the state budget would be crippling," said Chris McKenzie, League executive director who attended both meetings.

One of the two budget options put forth by the Governor on Thursday, May 14, would borrow local property taxes. With this official announcement, more and more cities are engaged and looking to pass resolutions declaring a state of severe fiscal hardship. City officials should contact their regional public affairs manager to take action.

A sample resolution can be found on the League's Web site http://www.cacities.org/resource_files/28002.SAMPLERESOLUTIONFINDINGASEVEREFISCALHARDSHIPMay8.pdf.

Local Associations Plan State Governance Reform Summit

Restoring Local Control Will Be Focus of Summit July 17-18

Whatever the outcome of the May 19 statewide special election, there is a growing belief among Californians and local government leaders that the state government has become hopelessly dysfunctional. The League board of directors supports the May 19 ballot measures, however it is keenly aware that late budgets, partisan gridlock, a lack of a long-range fiscal plan and a failure to address water resources, education and the other major pressing issues of the day are evidence of the need for fundamental reforms in how the business of California state government is conducted.

The League supported the establishment of a Fiscal Reform Task Force earlier this year by the City-County-School (CCS) partnership to study and recommend reforms to the state budget process and the state and local fiscal systems to address the dysfunction and gridlock that seems to have infected state government. The CCS Task Force has been meeting for the last few months and is prepared to submit a list of governance and fiscal reforms to address many of the problems plaguing state government. The major focus of the preliminary report is on the importance of restoring local control in our state-local system.

Meeting in Sacramento last month and reviewing the preliminary recommendations of the CCS Task Force, the League board of directors concluded that it was essential that the League and our sister local government associations provide leadership on state governance reform. The board unanimously adopted a resolution (http://www.cacities.org/resource_files/28001.RESOLUTIONENDORSINGSUMMITONSTATEGOVERNANCEREFORM-Final.pdf) inviting our county and school board partners to co-sponsor a Summit on State Governance Reform.

The invitation was recently accepted by the executive committees of both the California State Association of Counties (CSAC) and California School Boards Association (CSB) and is being considered this weekend by the delegate assembly of CSBA. Tentatively scheduled for Friday, July 17 and Saturday, July 18 at the Grand Hyatt Regency in Sacramento, the Summit will consider recommendations from the task force and feature debates on other ideas on state governance reform.

In the near future, the League will be inviting cities to designate a representative to attend the two-day Summit, which will also be attended by League board members who will be ending their July board meeting early to participate.

CalPERS Board Debates Methods to Ease Economic Pressures on Employer Contribution Rates

The economic downturn has caused the California Public Employees Retirement System (CalPERS) to lose a $100 billion in its investment portfolio. The CalPERS board and staff have begun serious talks about what the losses will mean for public agency employer contribution rates. These losses will have a significant impact on what city employers will be required to pay into the CalPERS pension fund beginning in FY 2011-12. The PERS Board is exploring methods to ease the blow to contribution rates because many cities are straining to meet financial obligations.

Chief Ron Seeling on May 13 presented an alternative method for determining employer contribution rates to the CalPERS board that could soften the impact of the market losses on employers. Seeling, referring to the market losses, commented that, “we believe this is a unique and catastrophic event.” He painted a bleak future for employers by stipulating that using the current method of determining employer contribution rates, with the losses the fund has experienced so far, will inevitably have a tremendous impact to local governments.

Seeling’s recommendation involves:
1. Isolating the July 1, 2008 through June 30, 2009 losses;
2. Breaking them into three separate years; and
3. Paying for the losses separately.

According to Seeling, by isolating the losses, CalPERS can generate a higher probability of improving its funded status. The CalPERS board voted six-to-four to have this issue revisited at its next board meeting in June. While most board members were relatively supportive of Seeling’s recommendation, the Controller and the Treasurer raised a number of issues.

Steve Cooney, the Treasurer’s board representative, declared that he was not ready to support Seeling’s recommendation on the basis that “the economy hasn’t really had a chance to play out.” He continued that CalPERS is in a unique position to address the larger issue of retirement security and to inspect what part of defined benefits should be re-examined. Cooney also remarked that, while certain benefits should be retained, re-examining other policies such as retirement age makes sense.

Tony Oliveira, local government board representative and Kings County supervisor, attempted to persuade the members to vote in favor of Seeling’s recommendation by conveying that this is a local government sustainability issue. He said that if the CalPERS board didn’t take action, the mounting pressure against defined benefit plans will only get greater and when that’s compounded with the current fiscal crises, this can become a huge problem for the state and local governments.

Anne Stausboll, CalPERS chief executive officer, announced that CalPERS will be holding a constituent meeting on this issue before the next scheduled CalPERS Board of Administration meeting in June. League staff will send information on the constituent meeting for interested city officials as it is received.

To see a more detailed look at Ron Seeling’s recommendation please visit: http://www.calpers.ca.gov/eip-docs/about/board-cal-agenda/agendas/full/200905/item14.pdf.

For questions please contact Natasha Karl, League legislative analyst at nkarl@cacities.org.

Bill Could Double Local Government Costs for Public Safety Personnel with Cancer

The League opposes AB 128 (Coto), a bill which would change the current cancer presumption law for public safety personnel. Police and fire are covered under the current workers’ compensation law, which provides a presumption for a cancer related injury for up to five years post-employment. A presumptive injury, illness, or disease under workers’ compensation presumes that the injury, illness, or disease occurred out of or in the course of employment. The burden of proof for a non-presumptive injury lies with the employee, but with presumptive injuries the employer must prove that the injury was caused by circumstances other than employment. Additionally, case law has made it impossible for employers to rebut a cancer presumption.

Current law also affords public safety personnel the ability make a cancer related claim after the five-year limitation, but the burden of proof shifts back to the injured worker away from the employer. AB 128 would eliminate the five-year post employment limitation and replace it with one-year of post employment to file a claim for every year of employment with the agency. For example, a fire fighter with a 30-year career would have up to 30 years post-employment to make a claim with the benefit of presumption that the cancer is a result of employment.

Estimates show that 50 percent of people will have some form of cancer at some point in their lives. AB 128 would give very expensive long-term health care benefits to firefighters for any cancer at the taxpayers' expense.

The California State Association of Counties Excess Insurance Authority conservatively estimates that the current $90 million in cancer claims will double to $180 million under AB 128. They further testified before the Assembly Insurance Committee that AB 128 could easily triple or quadruple the costs. The exposure under this new benefit for public agencies and the taxpayers is tremendous.

The bill passed the Assembly Insurance Committee and will be heard next in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

Take Action
Cities are urged to contact members of the Assembly Appropriations Committee to oppose AB 128. A sample opposition can be found on the League's Web site at www.cacities.org/billsearch. Enter "AB 128" into the search field to access the sample letter.

Apply for Funding from the Neighborhood Stabilization Program

The Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) recently issued a notice of funding availability for the Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP). The program was established by the Federal Housing Economic and Recovery Act of 2008 and provides $3.9 billion to various entities (including local governments) to purchase abandoned or foreclosed homes. Cities can use this money to rehabilitate communities affected by the housing crisis. The enacting law also requires any homes purchased with NSP funds to be sold or rented to low or moderate income families.

The first round of applications are due by June 15. HCD dedicated the following staff to assist with the application process and answer any questions:

- Leticia Martinez, lmartinez@hcd.ca.gov, (916) 552-9357
- Charles Ewers, cewers@hcd.ca.gov, (916) 319-8444
- Sharon Hoshiyama, shoshiyama@hcd.ca.gov, (916) 319-8100
- Rita Levy, rlevy@hcd.ca.gov, (916) 327-3822

The application can be found on the HCD Web site: http://www.hcd.ca.gov/fa/nsp/Final_App_5-8-09.doc.

Take action and apply for funds available through the NSP. Program funds will assist your city in mitigating the effects of the foreclosure problem.

Register Now for Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Webcast

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) has announced a series of webcasts and online resources on the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG). The next webcast will focus on the EECBG application process and is scheduled for **Wednesday, May 20, from 12-1:30 p.m. Pacific Time.** DOE plans to repeat this webcast weekly, as needed.

Agenda for webcast:

- EECBG Program overview and DOE's objectives for successful implementation;
- Solutions Center online tour featuring its resources;
- Discussion of sample strategies;
- Brief presentation by one-to-two local governments to share their preliminary plans and strategies; and
- Q&A;

To register for the webcast, visit:
http://www.eecbg.energy.gov/solutioncenter/webcasts/default.html

Additionally, DOE has revised and expanded their EECBG Web site, www.eecbg.energy.gov. The updated Web site features a new online Solution Center (http://www.eecbg.energy.gov/solutioncenter/eligibleactivities/default.html) that houses best practices and information resources for each eligible activity under the program.

The application deadline for EECBG formula grants from DOE is June 25.