


February 22, 1995

MEMO

To: **WCCAO Staff**

From: Jerralynn Ness, Executive Director

Subject: **Letter Campaign** 

The National Community Action Organizations have reported to the field that it is critically important that our Congressional delegates receive letters from their constituents expressing support for the work of their local Community Action Agency. Our Board endorsed a WCCAO letter writing campaign for the purpose of educating our National elected officials on the work that we do, the needs we address and the difference we make.

All Board members have been asked to send a letter to each of their Senators (Hatfield and Packwood) and their Representative in Congress. It is now time for all of us to do our part to assure that our delegation has a good understanding of the services we provide and the needs in our community. Our goal is to try and get all Board, staff, key supporters and clients to each send letters to their three delegates describing the value you feel WCCAO has to the community, the difference you believe WCCAO makes and the importance of our core Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) support.

For staff who work with clients, particularly in case management, we are hoping that you can each get about 6-10 clients to send letters. A sample letter for clients has been developed by client services. Paper, envelopes and stamps will be made available to clients. Connie will prepare packets and pass them on to client serving staff.

For staff letters, some points that can be made, in your own words, include:

We are a community based, locally controlled organization which allows us to be flexible, responsive to local needs and able to leverage significant private support.

Our philosophy is a "hand up, not a hand out". Our services annually touch the lives of thousands of low income households giving them the tools and the support they need to break the cycle of poverty and achieve self-sufficiency.

We bring a wide range of services under one roof, such as: Head Start, child care, weatherization, housing and homeless assistance, parenting education, emergency services, information and referral. This allows us to look holistically at the needs of families and better support their efforts to move out of poverty.

CSBG funds have been used as seed money which allowed us to organize and operate a county wide food bank, establish a family shelter home, establish a central client intake system, provide a range of social services needed by low-income families to move out of poverty, and expand the availability of affordable child care and housing.

CSBG funds have a multiplier effect. For fiscal year 1994-95, WCCAO received \$159,638 in core funding from the Community Services Block Grant which has leveraged \$3,790,575 in additional grants and financial contributions to address the causes and conditions of poverty in our community.

Administrative costs for fiscal year 1994-95 operations are at 7 1/2% and have never been above 10%

Over 500 volunteers annually donate time to WCCAO and thousands of dollars of in kind goods are donated to address local needs.

We have been effective in linking the private, public and voluntary sectors, creating ongoing partnerships and collaborations to more effectively and efficiently address the problems of poverty in our community.

Letters need to be sent in the next two to four weeks and can be mailed to:

Rep. Elizabeth Furse (District I)

316 Cannon HOB

Washington, D.C. 20515

(202)-225-0855

(202)-225-9497 FAX

E-Mail: FURSEOR1@HR.HOUSE.GOV

Rep. Ron Wyden (District 3)

1111 Longworth HOB

Washington, D.C. 20515

(202)225-4811

(202)225-8941 FAX

Senator Mark Hatfield

711 Hart Senate Office Bldg.

Washington, D.C. 20510

(202)224-3753

(202)224-0276 FAX

Senator Bob Packwood

259 Russel Senate Office Bldg.

Washington, D.C. 20510

(202)224-5244

(202)228-3576 FAX

Please send to me a copy of the letter you write, thanks for your help!