



For immediate release:
April 30, 2011

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Maryland DHCD Secretary Raymond A. Skinner to receive Special Recognition award – Monday, May 9, 2011 at 20th annual Affordable Housing Summit at Bethesda North Marriott Conference Center, 5701 Marinelli Road, North Bethesda, MD. Luncheon Awards Ceremony 12:45 -2:00 pm.

The Affordable Housing Conference of Montgomery County is honored to bestow Maryland Department of Housing & Community Development Secretary Raymond A. Skinner with a 20th anniversary special recognition award for his dedicated leadership in response to the state's foreclosure crisis and his stewardship of homeownership preservation and foreclosure prevention initiatives aimed at helping Maryland families.

As co-chair of the Governor's Homeownership Preservation Task Force, Secretary Skinner played a significant role in Maryland's early identification of the foreclosure crisis and helped shaped the recommendations that were adopted by the legislature. Those include significant legal reform so that the state's foreclosure process was made more transparent and more fair; the establishment of the Maryland HOPE Counseling Network, so that beleaguered homeowners had access to reliable information about their alternatives; and new protections against many of the fraudulent and predatory lending practices that helped precipitate the national crisis.

Illustrative of his national stature on the issue, Secretary Skinner testified in September 2009 before the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform on the impact of the foreclosure crisis on minority communities. Several of the agency's programs were recognized by the National Council of State Housing Finance Agencies in 2008.

With Secretary Skinner as steward, the Department of Housing and Community Development is proud to be at the forefront in implementing housing policy that promotes and preserves homeownership and creates innovative community development initiatives to meet the challenges of a growing Maryland.

Through the Maryland Mortgage Program, the agency has empowered thousands of Maryland families to realize the American dream of homeownership. The agency's rental housing programs increase and preserve the supply of affordable housing and provide good choices for working families, senior citizens, and individuals with special needs. Innovative programs such as Neighborhood BusinessWorks, Community Legacy, and Main Street Maryland support Smart Growth and help the state's cities and towns remain rich, vibrant communities.

The Affordable Housing Conference's 20th annual Summit is open to the public. Persons interested in attending can register online at www.affordablehousingconference.org.

