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To: Josh Hanford, Commissioner
Department of Housing and Community Development
From: Angela Zaikowski, Director
Vermont Landlords Association
Date: January 28, 2021
RE: Proposal for Funding under New Coronavirus Relief Bill

Dear Commissioner Hanford:

Please find this proposal for funding to continue to provide technical and support services to the landlord community for the months February 2021-December 2021. The funding request is for \$320,000, which would allow for three (3) full-time equivalent staff, a continuation of the mediation program, and an aggressive marketing campaign involving the creation of another information video, including translation services.

Goal:

To assist landlords with the following:

- Providing information related to any new Rental Assistance Programs;
- Providing navigation and direct application assistance to landlord seeking to apply into any new Rental Assistance Programs;
- Providing information and referrals to other housing related programs, including any Re-housing Recovery Program;
- Providing information and education related to the Vermont Eviction Stay/Moratorium (as imposed on S.333);
- Providing information and education on the Federal eviction moratorium for specific types of tenants and properties;
- Continue to offer and manage the Landlord-Tenant Mediation Program; and
- Providing information and education on any other COVID related issue as it relates to rental properties, including access, tenant interactions, health and safety requirements

Vermont Landlords Association requests an allocation of \$320,000 in Coronavirus Relief Funds to staff the project from February 1, 2021-December 30, 2021 with three full time equivalents. The goal is to provide information and assistance in navigating the process and not litigating or court representation of landlords. The funds would also be used for project manager, administrative support, and infrastructure to support employees.

Program specifics or other activities covered under the grant:

- Landlord does not need to be a member of the Landlords Association to receive assistance;
- Landlords would be able to access on the phone, via email, and by direct referral from community partners, Vermont State Housing Authority, Vermont Legal Aid, and others;
- Dedicated public page of the VT Landlord website with information, links, and contact information;
- Informational video on the program with encouragement to landlords to participate in the new program – description of new program with accompanying translations;
- Marketing campaign to specifically target the Landlord Community with messaging using professional marketing company for messaging and outreach;
- Ability to sub-contract with professional mediators for the Landlord-Tenant Mediation Program;
- Webinar or Training targeted to landlords on the programs identified above

Specific items included in the proposed budget and request:

- Information Video and Translation for new program - \$15,000.00
- Marketing - \$15,000.00
- Mediation Program Mediator Allocation - \$66,000.00
- Program Administration and Support - \$224,000.00

The mediation program funding request would allow for 22 mediations at the full program allowance of \$3,000 per mediation. Based on our prior experience with the program costs, the average cost for a mediation was \$1,095.00, meaning that if that trend held there would be funding for approximately 60 mediations. This program is a relatively low-cost approach to assisting landlords and tenants with resolving issues between them, particularly given the eviction moratorium.

Please let me know if there is additional information that you require, or further detail needed under the terms of the grant.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

/s/ Angela N. Zaikowski
Angela N. Zaikowski
Director