

Dear Governor Corzine:

Thank you for signing into law the historic affordable housing reform bill, A500/S1783. We write urging you to ensure the effective implementation of one of the bill's most important components— hiring the most qualified professional possible for the newly created position of DCA Senior Deputy Commissioner for Housing. In addition to extensive experience in housing policy, planning and development, this professional must be a proven expert in systems change, someone capable of facilitating the development and implementation of significant interdepartmental reforms. Given the unique qualifications called for by the position, we strongly urge you to waive the hiring freeze and open a search for the Senior Deputy Commissioner for Housing.

The procedure for developing a housing plan outlined in A500/S1783, builds and improves upon past planning processes. Housing policy involves interaction between almost every part of New Jersey state government—the Departments of Human Service, Transportation, Environmental Protection. By utilizing a public member commission supported by an interdepartmental working group to develop the housing plan, it has the potential to be a realistic policy document with the interdepartmental buy-in necessary to implement it.

The Senior Deputy Commissioner for Housing must facilitate an unprecedented level of interdepartmental cooperation in New Jersey, and a housing plan that ensures New Jersey's housing resources, currently scattered between many departments, are being fully leveraged and utilized in concert to achieve common goals. The potential is tremendous; with the right expertise, the Senior Deputy Commissioner for housing could play a key leadership role in ensuring all New Jersey residents have a safe, decent, affordable home.

Thank you for your consideration of our request. We commend you for your vision signing into law this historic piece of legislation, and appreciate your commitment to making the promise of A500 a reality for New Jersey.

Sincerely,