

Third Sector Group
Non-Profit Affordable Housing Organizations

Forward Community Investments
Statewide Community Financial Development

Wisconsin Catholic Conference

Wisconsin Jewish Conference

Wisconsin Council of Churches

Survival Coalition of Disability Orgs

Madison Area Urban Ministry

Make It Work Milwaukee Coalition

**Wisconsin Board for People
with Developmental Disabilities**

Disability Rights Wisconsin

Rehabilitation for Wisconsin

June 11, 2009

To: Assembly Democratic Caucus Members

From: Housing, Financial, Disability, and Religious Social Action Organizations

Re: Restore property tax provision to Joint Finance budget

Renters with low household incomes who live in rental housing owned by non-profit housing organizations have never been at greater risk of displacement. The stability of their homes is on the block because of action taken by the Assembly Democratic Caucus late Tuesday night. The Caucus removed a provision that would allow qualified non-profit housing organizations to maintain property tax exemptions, a necessity for the non-profit operating budget to keep this housing safe and viable for low-income tenants.

The property tax provision in the Joint Finance budget will not make taxable properties exempt; the purpose of the provision is to keep in place existing tax exemptions -- which would have a neutral impact on property tax revenues.

The undersigned recognize the compromise that created the tax exemption provision in the Joint Finance budget. This provision is the culmination of years of discussion, negotiation, and previously unsuccessful efforts. Low-income tenants simply cannot wait any longer.

We also recognize the imminent harm that will be faced by some of the most vulnerable members of our communities if the property tax provision is not restored. Make no mistake: if the property tax exemption is taken from the housing reserved for low income tenants, their homes may no longer be supportable by the non-profit owners. Low-income renters—many who are vulnerable due to age or disability—will be displaced.

We ask the Assembly Democratic Caucus to restore the tax exemption provision to the Joint Finance budget bill.

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