



TOWN OF CHILMARK

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Mr. Mark Southard
Department of Housing & Community Development
100 Cambridge Street
Suite 300
Boston, MA 02115

September 5, 2016

RE: FY17 One-Year Plan Comments

Dear Mr. Southard,

The Town of Chilmark has participated in a regional CDBG application in recent years. Currently due to our status as a CDF II community we are not eligible to participate for another year. We would like the opportunity to serve our residents on an annual basis, if funded, through submission of an FY17 application. With the delay in announcing the recently revised Needs Scores we can not do the extensive planning needed for a successful application and may not have time to react once the announcements are made.

The housing rehabilitation program and the childcare subsidy program have been very important in our town, helping residents in need. The proposed One Year Plan requires us to choose between providing a social service program and a housing program. Our community does not wish to favor one group of needy residents over another.

Finally a two-year program implementation period is excessive or requires that we take a year off. In a program like housing rehab this means that more families remain on the wait list while their homes increasingly disintegrate. A leaking roof this year, which could be addressed quickly, will be a significantly larger project next year when insulation is wet, walls are ruined and mold is present. An annual program also allows families to apply for consistent childcare subsidies versus "waiting out" a year. Funding caps for the two-year grant are not adequate to pay program staff for a two-year program. In initiating a two-year program you are effectively eliminating housing rehab because contractors and staff are not able to take a year off. We do support a maximum grant award per town over a two year period, perhaps less for CDF II communities than CDF I communities.

Finally the Chilmark Board of Selectmen wishes to thank the Department of Housing and Community Development for the opportunity to comment. We are grateful for your past support and hope that a longer comment period is considered so that the residents who are impacted by the new One Year Plan will have an opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Chilmark Board of Selectmen

cc: The Honorable Charlie Baker, Massachusetts Governor
The Honorable Dan Wolfe, Massachusetts State Senator
The Honorable Timothy Madden, Massachusetts State Representative
The Honorable William Keating, United States Congress, Washington DC
The Honorable Elizabeth Warren, United States Senate, Washington DC
The Honorable Edward Markey, United States Senate, Washington DC
Secretary Jay Ash, Executive Office of Housing and Community Development
Undersecretary Chrystal Kornegay, DHCD
Mr. Robert Shumeyko, CPD Regional Director, HUD