

SCOTT P. BROWN  
MASSACHUSETTS



2011 MAY 1 ~~United~~ States Senate

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20510

CITY CLERK'S OFFICE  
SOMERVILLE, MA

April 29, 2011

Mr. John J. Long  
City Clerk  
City Hall, 93 Highland Avenue  
Somerville, Massachusetts 02143

RE # 190904

Dear Mr. Long,

Thank you for contacting me regarding funding for the Community Development Block Grant program. As always, I value your input on all issues and appreciate hearing from the City of Somerville's Board of Aldermen. Please pass this along to the members of the Board.

As you may know, the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program was created in 1974 to replace HUD's Urban Development Action Grants to provide housing assistance to low-income families and improve the economic environment in those communities. The CDBG program provides over 1,200 flexible annual formula grants to the states and local governments. The funding is used for a wide range of community and economic development activities, such as public infrastructure improvements, housing rehabilitation and construction, job creation and retention, and public services (e.g., child care). 70 percent of the CDBG formula grants are distributed to mainly urban areas, with 30 percent being distributed to the states.

Congress has been actively working to resolve funding issues for the remainder of this fiscal year. Most recently, Congress approved H.R. 1473, which funds the government through September 30, 2011, and reduces funding for CDBG programs by almost \$600 million for Fiscal Year (FY) 2011. The Congressional Research Service estimates that under this new spending package,

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Massachusetts will receive \$98.76 million in CDBG funds, a 16 percent reduction from the prior year. As for FY 2012, President Obama's proposed budget funds the CDBG formula grant program at \$3.6 billion—a 7.5 percent reduction from the prior year.

I understand the importance of the CDBG program and have heard firsthand from local and city officials, like yourselves, about how critical this funding is to Massachusetts communities. There are virtually no areas of the budget that are completely immune from reductions because of the debts and deficits we face. As discussions continue for the annual budget and appropriations process, I will be sure to keep your concerns in mind regarding the CDBG program.

Again, thank you for sharing the thoughts of the City of Somerville. Should you have any additional questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'S. Brown'.

Scott P. Brown  
United States Senator