



Minnesota **H O U S I N G** Partnership

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For more information contact:

Barb Jacobs, (651) 649-1710 ext. 117
Minnesota Housing Partnership

Chip Halbach, (651) 649-1710 ext. 101
Minnesota Housing Partnership

Minnesota Housing Partnership Shows That Thousands of Minnesotans Continue to Wait for Affordable Housing

St. Paul, Minn. (October 20, 2006) - Waiting lists for public housing and the Section 8 Housing Choice voucher program surpassed 47,000 individuals and families in the first half of 2006, according to a report released today by the Minnesota Housing Partnership.

In an effort to inform discussion around proposed Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher and public housing legislation, MHP has issued a report listing the number of households on waitlists for these programs at housing agencies across the state. The report, which can be found at www.mhponline.org, also includes information on average wait times and cost-reduction strategies that housing agencies have implemented in response to funding shortages and program cuts.

"MHP is hoping these findings will spur renewed support for these essential programs, which serve some of our most vulnerable households," says Chip Halbach, executive director of the Minnesota Housing Partnership. "Policy makers and candidates alike need to remember that, in spite of the high quality of these programs, substantial numbers of Minnesotans continue to wait for housing assistance."

Twenty thousand households in more than 200 communities across the state call public housing home. Public housing is rental housing that is owned by local government agencies, which receive annual funding from Congress to pay for the costs associated with its operation and maintenance. The Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher program is a federally-funded, locally administered program that helps 30,000 low-income households rent privately-owned housing in Minnesota. Voucher-holders find units that meet program standards related to cost and quality; housing authorities then make a payment to the landlord that bridges the gap between what tenants can afford and the actual rent.

The report compiles information from 89 housing agencies that administer these programs, received in response to a questionnaire MHP sent out to all of Minnesota's housing agencies, with the assistance of Minnesota NAHRO—the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials.

The report will also help inform discussion at the Homes for All! 2006 Convention, to be held December 7 at the St. Paul RiverCentre. The non-partisan convention will allow Minnesota agencies, corporations, and citizens to come together, review housing trends facing the state, and take action on solutions to close the housing gap. For more information about Homes for All! 2006, visit www.homes-for-all.org.

To view the report, please visit mhponline.org.

The Minnesota Housing Partnership is a statewide nonprofit organization that advances the preservation and creation of housing affordable to low- and moderate-income people as a means of strengthening communities and families. MHP provides local governments and nonprofit housing organizations access to loans, grants and technical expertise to plan and construct housing, in addition to educating people on sound housing policies.

###