



--For Immediate Release--

**Community Action Agencies Create Over 400 Jobs in Wisconsin
With federal stimulus funds
*Agencies help to over 100,000 residents; weatherize 4,723 homes***

Wisconsin's 16 Community Action Agencies and the United Migrant Opportunity Services have created over 400 jobs thanks to federal stimulus funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). These jobs are included in the latest White House report released April 29 at Recovery.gov and are further summarized in a report released from the Wisconsin Community Action Program Association (WISCAP) today.

"Recovery Act resources continue to help rebuild our uncertain economy in communities across Wisconsin," said Richard Schlimm, Executive Director of WISCAP. "Community Action Agencies have been assigned responsibility for a number of programs that help people through hard times and create good jobs that, in turn, provide needed services to individuals and families."

Community Action Agencies (CAAs) are locally-based organizations with a mission to help low-income households become economically self-sufficient and, in the process, help local communities grow and nurture their economic health. The agencies are governed by local boards of directors comprised of local elected officials, representatives of other local organizations including the private sector, and low-income people. Wisconsin's 16 CAAs serve 69 of Wisconsin's 72 counties.

According to the WISCAP report, agencies use funds to provide badly needed safety net assistance as well as giving economic opportunity to recently unemployed and low-income people and families throughout the state. Schlimm said that "our CAAs have seen increased numbers of families at food pantries, homeless shelters, and free clinics." Agencies have helped families stay in their homes by helping struggling homeowners avoid foreclosure and renters avoid eviction; by preventing utility shut-offs; and by providing budgeting and financial literacy services. In addition, Community Action Agencies have used funds for expanding job and business development efforts which help low-income and other entrepreneurs create small businesses—some of these in "green" technologies or as trained weatherization sub-contractors. Agencies have also used funds to expand the Community Action Skills Enhancement Program—with a proven track record helping low-wage workers get good jobs with benefits.

In another area of critical economic stimulus, according to the Report, CAP agencies have weatherized 4,723 housing units during the past 9 months using ARRA and other federal and state funds. "CAP agencies have been the backbone of the State's weatherization assistance program for more than 30 years," according to Bob Jones, Public Policy Director for WISCAP. Jones explained that 13 CAAs operate the program in their communities and produce more than half of the total housing units weatherized by a statewide network of 21 program operators. "The low-income weatherization program is one of the State's most successful programs when it comes to reducing

energy consumption and it has a profound long-lasting ability to produce real savings for low-income households,” Jones said.

"These high-impact activities will keep pumping resources and hope into the economies of Wisconsin communities through the summer and well into future years," Schlimm said. He added that “after the stimulus has ended, Community Action Agencies will remain for the long haul providing assistance to families and serving as an integral part of their communities in the State.”

- End -

Richard Schlimm, Executive Director

Wisconsin Community Action Program Association (WISCAP)

608-244-4422 or rschlimm@wiscap.org

For a complete copy of the WISCAP Report

And a listing of and contact information for the Community Action Agencies

And for additional information about Community Action Agencies in Wisconsin visit

www.wiscap.org