



### **Member Agencies:**

Advocates for Children and Youth  
Baltimore Jewish Council  
CASA of Maryland Inc.  
Catholic Charities  
Energy Advocates  
Episcopal Community Services  
Health Care for the Homeless  
Homeless Persons  
Representation Project  
Interfaith Works  
Jewish Community Relations Council  
of Greater Washington  
Job Opportunities Task Force  
League of Women Voters of Maryland  
Maryland Budget & Tax Policy Institute  
Maryland CASH Campaign  
Maryland Catholic Conference  
Maryland Community Action  
Partnership  
Maryland Family Network  
Maryland Hunger Solutions  
Maryland Interfaith  
Legislative Committee  
National Council on Alcoholism & Drug  
Dependence – Maryland Chapter  
Public Justice Center  
St. Vincent de Paul Society  
United Way of Central Maryland  
Welfare Advocates

### **Maryland Alliance for the Poor**

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## **STATEMENT ON THE FISCAL 2010 BUDGET DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

**Senate Budget and Taxation Committee,  
Subcommittee on Health, Education, and Human Resources  
Thursday, March 4, 2010**

*Submitted by Branden McLeod, Chair*

The Maryland Alliance for the Poor (MAP) is a statewide network of advocacy organizations, service providers, and faith communities working together to advocate on behalf of Marylanders living in or near poverty. We support the work Maryland's Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) does to ensure that low-income Marylanders have access to affordable and adequate housing.

MAP comes to you today in particular support of DHCD's Rental Allowance Program (RAP), which provides grants to local governments to provide rental subsidies to low-income families who are homeless, are in danger of becoming homeless, or have an emergency housing need. Eligible households have incomes at or below 30% of the statewide or area median income, whichever is higher. Monthly payments are based on the size of the family and the location of the rental housing unit in the state. Payments can be received for up to 12 months, and may be extended under special circumstances.

Affordable rental housing remains elusive in Maryland, especially for those who live in or near poverty. The 2009 Fair Market Rent for a two-bedroom apartment ranged from \$577 a month in Allegany County to \$1,288 in the Washington metropolitan area. In order for this rent to be affordable (that is, for a family to spend no more than 30% of its monthly income on rent) a family would have to have annual earnings of \$23,080 in Allegany County and \$51,520 in the counties surrounding Washington, D.C. In Allegany County, a 3-person household is eligible for RAP with an income of less than \$22,050. In the Washington metropolitan area, that household is eligible with an income of less than \$27,700.

RAP has historically been funded at just \$1.7 million annually. Though small, the program provides vital assistance to the families who receive it. MAP respectfully urges the committee to preserve this vital support for low-income Marylanders in need of affordable and adequate housing. Thank you for your consideration.