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"We must preserve the Community Development Block Grant program and ensure that HUD awards those grants fairly. We should not, as the President's budget sets forth, slash the federal commitment to affordable housing and community development," said Rothman.

Mayors and other officials from Bergen County have raised concerns about potential changes to the formula HUD uses to distribute community development funds. Additionally, President Bush has proposed an overall cut to funding for these block grants of approximately 20%.

"New Jersey ranks 47th out of 50 states in the nation in the amount of available affordable housing," said Rothman. "It is wrong to set back efforts to improve access to affordable housing and community development in this state."

The CDBG program is the largest source of federal financial assistance in support of state and local governments' community development and neighborhood revitalization activities. The program promotes local decision-making and is intended to principally benefit low- or moderate-income individuals, prevent or eliminate slums and blight, and meet urgent needs that threaten the health and safety of the public.

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