

Florida Habitat for Humanity Receives \$20 Million Grant



by Barbara Inman

Florida's Habitat for Humanity affiliates are poised to acquire and rehabilitate a substantial number of homes for very low-income families (under 80% AMI) thanks to a \$20 million grant made by the Florida Legislature. The funding came from the good work of Florida's Attorney General Pam Bondi, who led the effort for the National Mortgage Settlement, which was appropriated in SB 1852 by the Florida Legislature.

This is the largest grant made to Habitat for Humanity of Florida. We will be following the lead of several other Habitat for Humanity State Organizations that have acquired funding to deploy to their respective Habitat affiliates. This is both a great opportunity and a challenge—but one for which Habitat Florida is well-prepared, both because Habitat Florida builds more Habitat homes than any other state in the country, and due to their involvement with other funding sources such that require significant monitoring and reporting.

The Habitat grant will be monitored by the Department of Economic Opportunity. The funds will be available to the state's 58 affiliates through an RFP process. Florida's Habitat for Humanity affiliates are accustomed to purchasing and rehabilitating foreclosed homes as they have been active participants in the Neighborhood Stabilization Program since 2009, so Habitat organizations have learned the different skills needed for rehabilitation in addition to new construction. The grant prohibits Habitat from creating new units in Florida, only acquisition and rehab or demolition and reconstruction.

The legislation includes monitoring and compliance requirements and a deadline for the expenditure of the funds by June of 2015. Funds not expended on occupied homes by September of 2015 will have to be repaid to the State Housing Trust Fund. Habitat officials are not worried about meeting the target deadline!



The Sanchez-Miranda family.



The Eborda family.



The Aktel family.

Habitat Florida will have a caucus at the Coalition's Annual Statewide Conference on September 9th. The primary topic will be the status of the Mortgage Settlement Funds, as well as organizing in their communities to advocate for SHIP funding. [HNN](#)

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