



STATE OF MARYLAND

Community Health Resources Commission

4201 Patterson Avenue, Room 315 • Baltimore, Maryland 21215

Martin O'Malley, Governor – Anthony G. Brown, Lt. Governor – John A. Hurson, Chairman
Grace S. Zaczek, Acting Executive Director

MEMORANDUM

Date: January 16, 2008
To: Commissioners, Current Applicants for Operational Grants and All Interested Parties
From: John A. Hurson, Chairman
Re: Postponement of Funding Decisions on Current Operational Grant Proposals

As Chairman of the Maryland Community Health Resources Commission it is my responsibility to insure that the process we use to award grants to Maryland community health resources is the best possible one that provides fairness and competence as we weigh the value to the citizens of the state of the various grant proposals. Therefore I have decided to postpone the funding decision on the current round of 48 grant proposals submitted to the Committee for two months. Here are the specific reasons for this decision:

- Because of the Holidays and the challenge of contracting four external peer reviewers, the process was delayed. We cannot reach decisions until all reports from all external peer reviewers are in and read by the entire Capital and Operating Grants Committee of the Commission.
- We received more proposals than anticipated (48) in four disparate fields that require expertise from outside of the Commission, including financial reviews by an auditor.
- Some of the proposals had complicated pass-throughs and multiple subcontractors that required a more in-depth due diligence.
- An external legal review was required to determine the eligibility of some applicants to receive funds from the Commission.
- Before awarding additional grants, grantees that already have received grant awards in previous grant rounds must be reviewed to determine if they meet all Commission performance monitoring, participatory evaluation, external evaluation, site visits, and reporting requirements.

In order to improve our process of review, after all external peer reviews have been completed and an initial reading by the Commissioners is completed, those applicants who wrote proposals that might receive funding will be asked to prepare an oral presentation and to answer questions before the entire Commission. This represents a change in our grant-review process that requires more preparation. The applicants and Commissioners will have the opportunity for a back-and-forth conversation about the proposed projects that will be transparent and public. I anticipate that this public hearing of the Commission will take place in early March 2008.

I ask the applicants for patience. There are limits of time, staff, and resources at the Commission. We want to do a fair and thorough review of all proposals. If you have any questions, you may contact Grace Zaczek, the Commission's Acting Executive Director. Ms. Zaczek may be reached at 410-764-4661.

Thank you.

cc: Jane Pilliod, AAG
Grace S. Zaczek