

BROTHERHOOD Crusade

June 10, 2014

Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Economic Development
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
451 Seventh Street SW., Room 7136
Washington, DC 20410

ATTN: Second Round Promise Zone selections

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to express my concerns about the proposed selection process, qualifying criteria and submissions for the second round of the Promise Zone initiative.

As the leader of the Brotherhood Crusade, a 501 © 3 non-profit organization located in South Los Angeles, the most pressing concern for our community is that "only one Promise Zone application may be submitted within the boundaries of a unit of general local government per application cycle." While this criterion may make sense for smaller jurisdictions, it is problematic for a metropolis like Los Angeles.

With approximately 3.8 million residents, the city of Los Angeles has a population larger than nearly half of the states in our country. Because of our size, there is the potential for several distinct communities to submit compelling applications to be designated as Promise Zones. These communities should not be discriminated against simply because they are located in a populous urban area.

Second, the total number of inhabitants within a proposed Promise Zone is limited to 200,000. This number represents roughly 5% of our City's population. A higher maximum population threshold would be more suitable for an area like Los Angeles.

Finally, the proposed Promise Zone must encompass a contiguous geography with an overall poverty rate over 33%. Because of this criterion, certain needy areas of our City would not be eligible due to close proximity to high-income areas. A lowered poverty rate requirement, similar to that of the first round of Promise Zone selection, would alleviate this issue.

I firmly believe that addressing the points outlined above will enable the Promise Zone initiative to fulfill its mission of revitalizing high-poverty communities across the country.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Charisse Bremond Weaver
President & CEO

Helping people,
help themselves



VERMONT VILLAGE



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To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Robert Rubin the Executive Director for VVCDC writing to express my concerns about the proposed selection processes, qualifying criteria and submissions for the second round of the Promise Zone initiative which South Los Angeles in particular, with the lowest economic indicators in the City missed the first round without notice. All the economic indicators are below the poverty line.

As a community leader for over 22 years; having seen the Enterprise Zones and Community Redevelopment Agency tools fail to assisted our community in revitalization efforts has me concerned. We have no tools to rebuild our area after the 1992 civil unrest. Our non-profit organization in South Los Angeles is concern that "only one Promise Zone application may be submitted within the boundaries of a unit of general local government per application cycle." While this criterion may make sense for smaller jurisdictions, it is problematic for a metropolis like Los Angeles, with approximately 3.8 million residents. The City of Los Angeles has a population larger than nearly half of the states in our country.

Because of our size, high poverty levels and the mortgage melt down; other interest groups continue to ignore our needs for several distinct communities to submit compelling applications to be designated as Promise Zones. These communities should not be discriminated against simply because they are located in a populous urban area, ignoring the blight and poverty levels of these communities with the poor.

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It is my personal convictions that this request be considered when deciding to select any area, previously overlook in poorer communities by addressing the points outlined to enable the Promise Zone initiative to fulfill its mission of revitalizing high-poverty communities across the country.

Respectfully,



Robert Rubin
Executive Director



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President & CEO

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In hope,

Marqueece Harris-Dawson
President & CEO