

Statement of Donna J. Gambrell
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U.S. Department of the Treasury
June 18, 2009

Introduction

Good morning, Chairman Watt, Chairman Neal, and distinguished Members of the Committee on Financial Services, and the Committee on Ways and Means. I am delighted to be here today to testify at this hearing on the U.S. Government Accountability Office's (GAO) recent report that addresses the success rates of minority entities in the New Markets Tax Credit (NMTC) Program.

My name is Donna J. Gambrell and I am the Director of the U.S. Department of the Treasury's Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI) Fund. I want to assure Congress that since I became Director of the CDFI Fund almost two years ago, I have been committed to expanding participation in all of our programs.

First, I would like to thank Chairman Neal and Ranking Member Tiberi for recently introducing H.R. 2628, "The New Markets Tax Credit Extension Act of 2009" that would extend the NMTC Program through 2013, and allow NMTC investments to be used as an offset against Alternative Minimum Tax liabilities for awards made in 2009.

Last month, and just 100 days after the President signed into law the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (Recovery Act), I had the privilege of joining Treasury Secretary Tim Geithner, Chairman Frank, Congressman Capuano, and Governor Deval Patrick in Roxbury, Massachusetts to announce that 32 organizations had been selected to receive \$1.5 billion in NMTC allocation authority that was made available under the Recovery Act. Three of these 32 awardees are minority-owned or controlled entities, bringing to seven the total number of minority-owned or controlled entities that received awards under the 2008 allocation round. These seven awardees received NMTC awards totaling \$489 million.

The event was held at the headquarters of Project Hope, a multi-service agency that provides low-income women with children access to education, jobs, housing, and emergency services. The building is located in Roxbury, which is referred to by the City of Boston as "the heart of Black culture in Boston." This new building was financed with a \$4.8 million investment made possible through the NMTC Program.

Joining the Secretary for this announcement event allowed me to witness firsthand how the NMTC Program has enabled Project Hope to enrich its community and improve the lives of the local residents. Their new Community Building is a "green" building, the

first one in Roxbury, and will enable Project Hope to provide services to a number of additional women and families.

At the announcement event, I also had the opportunity to visit with Shaniqua Choice, a young woman who will soon graduate from the Match School, a public charter school that prepares inner-city Boston students for higher education, including many who have no family history of college attendance. Ninety-six percent of the students at the Match Charter School are minorities. The Match School received a NMTC investment which it used, in part, to set up a tutoring program with 45 recent college graduates who were hired to live in dormitories at the high school and tutor the students.

Shaniqua lives in Dorchester in a single-parent home with a mother who, while she was growing up, only had a GED. She would get up at 4:30 am every day, traveling an hour and half on the train to make it to school on time. She entered Match High School as a freshman in September 2005 performing at a 5th grade math level. Now, four years later, she will soon become the first in her family to go to college, attending Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts in North Adams in the fall. Shaniqua says the tutoring program is essential to the Match School's success and to her success.

These are the stories and community impacts that are often undetected among the statistics and data of program evaluations but are the most important aspect of what we are trying to accomplish with programs like the New Markets Tax Credit Program.

The CDFI Fund

In 1994, Congress enacted the Riegle Community Development and Regulatory Improvement Act (P.L. 103-325) to create the CDFI Fund. Congress found that many of the Nation's distressed urban, rural, and Native American communities faced critical social and economic problems arising in part from the lack of economic growth, people living in poverty, and the lack of employment and other opportunities. The CDFI Fund's mission is to expand the capacity of financial institutions to provide credit, capital, and financial services to underserved populations and economically distressed communities across the United States.

The CDFI Fund achieves its mission through five distinct competitive programs:

- CDFI Program: Provides Financial Assistance awards to institutions that are certified as CDFIs, which in turn provide loans, investments, financial services (including financial education) and technical assistance to underserved populations and low-income communities; the CDFI Fund also provides Technical Assistance grants to certified CDFIs and entities that will become certified as CDFIs within three years.
- Native Initiatives: Provides Financial Assistance awards, Technical Assistance grants, and training to Native CDFIs and other Native entities proposing to become or create Native CDFIs.

- Bank Enterprise Award Program: Provides monetary awards to FDIC-insured banks to increase their investment in low-income communities and/or in CDFIs.
- New Markets Tax Credit Program: Provides tax allocation authority to certified CDEs, enabling investors to claim tax credits against their Federal income taxes; the CDEs, in turn, use the capital raised to make investments in low-income communities.
- Capital Magnet Fund: Authorized under the Housing and Economic Recovery Act of 2008 but not yet funded, the Capital Magnet Fund will provide a source of funding for CDFIs and other non-profits to finance the development, rehabilitation and purchase of affordable housing for low-income persons. The Administration has requested \$80 million for this new initiative in FY 2010.

Among the beneficiaries of the CDFI Fund's programs are low-income people and/or economically distressed communities, which include, among others, populations that otherwise lack adequate access to capital and financial services. Since its creation in 1994, the CDFI Fund has made more than \$949.3 million in awards to CDFIs, community development organizations and financial institutions through the CDFI Program, the Bank Enterprise Award Program, and the Native American Initiatives CDFI Assistance Program. Since 2002, the year of our first New Markets Tax Credit Program round, the CDFI Fund has allocated \$21 billion in tax credit authority to CDEs, including the \$1.5 billion that was awarded in May of 2009 under the Recovery Act authority.

New Markets Tax Credit Program Overview

The NMTC Program was initially authorized through the Community Renewal Tax Relief Act of 2000¹. This unique tax credit program facilitates investment in low-income communities by permitting taxpayers to receive a credit against Federal income taxes for making Qualified Equity Investments (QEIs) in designated Community Development Entities (CDEs). Substantially all of these QEI dollars must in turn be used

¹ The original legislation that authorized the program allowed for \$15 billion in tax credit authority for the NMTC program through 2007. Pub. L. No. 106-554, App. G, § 121, 114 Stat. 2763A-587, 608 ("There is a new markets tax credit limitation for each calendar year. Such limitation is—(A) \$1,000,000,000 for 2001, (B) \$1,500,000,000 for 2002 and 2003, (C) \$2,000,000,000 for 2004 and 2005, and (D) \$3,500,000,000 for 2006 and 2007."). However, the Gulf Opportunity Zone Act of 2005 authorized an additional \$1 billion of NMTC equity for qualified areas affected by Hurricane Katrina over a period of 3 years: \$300 million in 2005, \$300 million in 2006, and \$400 million in 2007. Pub. L. No. 109-135, § 101, 119 Stat. 2577, 2592. The Tax Relief and Health Care Act of 2006 and the Emergency Economic Stabilization Act of 2008 extended the amount of NMTC authority available by \$3.5 billion for 2008 and 2009, respectively. Pub. L. No. 109-432, § 102, 120 Stat. 2922, 2934 (2006); Pub. L. No. 110-343, div. A, § 302, 122 Stat. 3765, 3866 (2008). The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 provided an additional \$3 billion of NMTC allocation authority to be split equally between the 2008 (retroactively) and 2009 allocation rounds. Pub. L. No. 111-5, div. A, § 1403(a).

by the CDE to provide investments in businesses and real estate developments in low-income communities.

The credit provided to the investor totals 39 percent of the amount of the investment and is claimed over a seven-year credit allowance period. In each of the first three years, the investor receives a credit equal to five percent of the total amount paid for the stock or capital interest at the time of purchase. For the final four years, the value of the credit is six percent annually. Investors may not redeem their investments in CDEs prior to the conclusion of the seven-year period.

A CDE is a domestic corporation or partnership that serves as an intermediary vehicle for the provision of loans, investments, or financial counseling to low-income communities. To qualify as a CDE, an entity must: 1) have a mission of serving, or providing investment capital for, low-income communities or low-income persons; 2) maintain accountability to residents of low-income communities through their representation on a governing board of or an advisory board to the entity; and 3) be certified by the CDFI Fund as a CDE. Applicants may submit CDE certification applications throughout the year and are approved by the CDFI Fund on a rolling basis.

The CDFI Fund is responsible for administering the competitive allocation of tax credit authority to CDEs, which it does through annual allocation rounds. To date, the CDFI Fund has made 386 NMTC allocation awards totaling \$21 billion, through six different allocation rounds. The CDFI Fund will award an additional \$5 billion of allocation authority, including \$1.5 billion of allocation authority that was made available under the Recovery Act, under the 2009 allocation round. The CDFI Fund anticipates making these award announcements in October of 2009.

To date, investors have invested \$13.7 billion into CDEs, or over 70 percent of the NMTC allocation authority that was awarded to CDEs through 2008. In fact, since September of 2008, investors have invested close to \$2 billion into CDEs, demonstrating the resiliency of this program in even the most difficult of economic times.

Through FY 2007, the most recent year for which the CDFI Fund has complete data, CDEs invested \$8.96 billion of NMTC proceeds into 1,981 businesses and real estate projects in low-income communities, supporting over \$30 billion in total project costs. These investments have financed a wide variety of projects, including charter schools, health care facilities, performing arts centers, manufacturing companies, alternative energy companies, business incubators, grocery-anchored shopping centers, substance abuse treatment facilities, and facilities for the homeless. NMTC awardees reported that, through 2007, their investments have helped to develop or rehabilitate 63 million square feet of real estate, create 240,000 temporary construction jobs, and create or maintain 45,000 jobs at businesses in low-income communities.

Success of the New Markets Tax Credit Program

One of the greatest innovations of the NMTC Program is that it combines the features of a competitive grant program with the advantages of private sector investment and decision-making. Most Federal tax credits are simply claimed by taxpayers rather than competitively allocated, and most community development programs of comparable size to the NMTC Program are administered through formula-funding mechanisms. Through competition under the NMTC Program, the CDFI Fund selects only the most qualified CDEs, and requires them to meet higher standards and achieve greater results than would otherwise be minimally required under Internal Revenue Service program rules.

For example, while all awardees are required to invest substantially all (generally 85 percent) of the qualified equity investments they receive in low-income communities, most applicants commit to making investments in areas characterized by “severe” economic distress – and are held to these commitments as part of their award agreements with the CDFI Fund. As a result, over 75 percent of NMTC transactions financed through 2007 were located in census tracts with a poverty rate of at least 30 percent, a median family income at or below 60 percent of the applicable area median family income, and/or an unemployment rate at least 1.5 times the national average.

Similarly, IRS regulations do not specify that CDEs must offer beneficial rates and terms to the borrowers and investees in low-income communities. However, as part of the application materials, CDEs generally commit to providing flexible and non-traditional product offerings, and are held to these commitments as part of their award agreements with the CDFI Fund. Through 2007, over 98 percent of the transactions offered preferential rates and terms to the borrowers. The most common features are below market interest rates (83 percent of transactions), lower origination fees (59 percent of transactions), and longer than standard periods of interest-only payments (54 percent of transactions).

CDEs are also committing to increasing their investments in low-income communities. NMTC Program regulations generally require that at least 85 percent of QEI proceeds be invested in qualified, low-income community investments. However, as part of the application materials, CDEs generally commit to investing significantly more of these funds into low-income communities. In fact, all 32 awardees recently selected to receive \$1.5 billion in Recovery Act awards indicated that they would invest at least 94 percent of their NMTC proceeds into low-income communities, and 24 of the 32 awardees indicated that at least 97 percent of their QEI dollars would be invested into low-income communities.

These and other program successes were highlighted in a 2007 evaluation of the NMTC Program conducted by the GAO. As part of this evaluation, officials from the GAO met several times with officials from the IRS and the CDFI Fund. GAO officials collected documents on program status and efforts to monitor NMTC compliance; analyzed transactional data reported by CDEs to the CDFI Fund; analyzed tax return data reported by NMTC investors to the IRS; surveyed investors in the NTMC program; and compared

NMTC investors with a stratified random sample of investors that did not make NMTC investments. This extensive research led to several findings pointing to the effectiveness of the NTMC Program, including:

- An estimated 88 percent of investors said that they would not have made the same investment without the NMTC.
- Of these investors who would not have made the same investment without the NMTC, 75 percent of investors also indicated that in the absence of the NMTC, they would not have made a similar investment in the same community.
- Sixty-nine percent (69 percent) of the investors making investments in CDEs in 2006 had not previously made investments in those entities.
- An estimated 64 percent of NMTC investors reported that they increased the share of their investment budget for low-income communities because of the credit.
- Communities receiving NMTC investments tend to be more highly distressed than minimally required under program rules.

These findings, among others, led the GAO to ultimately conclude that “the results of our survey and statistical analysis are consistent with the NMTC program increasing investment in eligible low-income communities by the investors who participate in the program and with investment coming primarily from funds shifted from other uses.”

NMTC Application Review Process

The successes that we’ve seen to date under the NMTC Program are a result of the high demand for credits, coupled with a rigorous application process. In any given application round, only about one in four applicants is selected to receive an award, and requests for tax credit authority have been between six and nine times greater than what is available to award.

Table 1
Allocation History since Program Inception (Dollars in Billions)

Round	Applications		Awards	
	Number	Amount Requested	Number	Amount
1 (2001/2)	345	\$25.8	66	\$2.5
2 (2003/4)	265	\$29.6	63	\$3.5
3 (2005)	203	\$22.5	41	\$2.0
4 (2006)	239	\$27.2	63	\$4.1
5 (2007)	252	\$27.4	61	\$3.9
6 (2008)	239	\$21.3	102	\$5.0
All Rounds	1,543	\$153.8	396	\$21.0

As part of the selection process, all CDEs are required to prepare and submit a uniform application form, which includes four key sections (Business Strategy; Community Impact; Management Capacity; Capitalization Strategy). During the first phase of the review process, each application is rated and scored independently by three different Readers, who are typically external to the CDFI Fund. Readers are selected on the basis of their knowledge of community and economic development finance and experience in business or real estate finance, business counseling, secondary market transactions, or financing of community-based organizations.

In order to maintain the integrity of the review process, all potential readers are screened for any potential or real conflicts of interest. They are brought to Washington, DC for a two-day orientation and training session. The Readers then work remotely, submitting on-line review forms, which include detailed notes and instructions pertaining to how the application must be scored. Each application write-up is reviewed by a CDFI Fund staff person to ensure that the reviewer has: 1) provided clear and substantive comments; 2) adhered to the scoring guidelines; and 3) provided scores that are consistent with their ratings.

In scoring each application, reviewers rate each of the four evaluation sections as follows: Weak (0-5 points); Limited (6-10 points); Average (11-15 points); Good (16-20 points); and Excellent (21-25 points). Applications can be awarded up to ten additional “priority” points for demonstrating a track record of serving disadvantaged businesses and communities and/or for committing to make investments in projects owned by unrelated parties. Readers are not permitted to discuss their application ratings or scores with one another. If one or more of the three Readers provides an anomalous score, and it is determined that such an anomaly would affect the outcome of the final awardee pool, then a fourth reviewer will score the application, and the anomalous score would likely be dropped.

Once all of the scores have been finalized, including anomaly score adjustments, those applications that meet minimum aggregate scoring thresholds in each of the four major review sections (as well as a minimum overall scoring threshold) are eligible to be considered for an allocation. They are reviewed by an internal CDFI Fund panel, with the Panel Manager making an award recommendation to the Selecting Official (generally the NMTC Program Manager). If the Selecting Official’s award recommendation amount varies significantly from the recommendation of the Panel Manager, then the Reviewing Official (generally the Deputy Director for Policies and Programs) makes the final award determination. Awards are made, in descending order of the final rank score, until the available allocation authority for a given round is fully expended.

In any given allocation round, there are many CDEs that meet the minimum requisite scoring thresholds, but which do not receive an award because the CDFI Fund runs out of allocation authority. Each applicant that is not selected to receive an NMTC allocation award is provided with a written debriefing document. This document provides to the applicant the strengths and weaknesses that were identified by the application reviewers.

The debriefing documents are very useful tools for applicants wishing to reapply in future rounds.

Application Success Rates of Minority-Owned CDEs

The CDFI Fund agrees with the GAO's conclusions that, within this highly competitive application environment, organizations that have identified themselves as minority-owned CDEs have not received allocation awards in proportion to their representation in the application pool. The CDFI Fund does not believe that this lower rate of success for minority CDEs, or for that matter the success rate of any other category of CDE, is attributable to biases in the application review or selection process. Rather, the CDFI Fund believes that it is the relative capacity of each applicant, reviewed under its own merits without regard to its ownership structure, which determines the award outcomes. As the GAO noted in its evaluation:

“The analysis does not exclude the possibility the minority status is associated with other characteristics of the CDE, such as management capacity for which we do not have independent data, which account for the lower probability. In that case, it would not be minority status per se that lowers the probability of success but its association with other factors not included in the analysis.” (page 38).

Without discounting the importance of GAO's findings, it is also worth noting that the GAO relied on information self-reported by the applicants at the time of application submission, which may have resulted in an undercounting of awardees that are minority-owned CDEs.

Each applicant CDE is required to “check a box” indicating whether it, or its parent company, is minority-owned or controlled. This check-box appears alongside several other check-boxes that address the ownership structure/purpose of the CDE. It is quite likely that, in any given application round, a number of organizations that would otherwise qualify as minority owned CDEs fail to check the box. This failure may result from simply overlooking the check-box, or it may occur because an organization did not thoroughly review the definition of a minority-owned entity that is provided in the glossary that accompanies the application.

It could be the case that many non-profit organizations which have significant minority executive control fall within the CDFI Fund's definition of a minority-owned entity, but perhaps have not been checking the box. It does not appear as though the GAO attempted to adjust for this potential under-reporting by reaching out to a sample of non-minority CDEs to determine whether they may have failed to identify themselves as minority CDEs. This type of analysis would have probably had an impact on their findings, and perhaps led them to determine that a larger number of minority-owned or controlled CDEs have received allocation awards than were initially self-identified.

Again, this observation is being raised simply to add a little more context to the GAO's findings. It should not be construed in any way as a criticism of GAO's analysis, which

we believe was thorough and accurate with respect to information that was self-reported by the CDEs.

Investments in Minority Communities

Despite the application challenges that are faced by minority-owned CDEs, the CDFI Fund believes that the NMTC Program has been extremely successful at bringing benefits to communities with large minority populations. As noted in the GAO report, a 2008 study that was jointly sponsored by the CDFI Fund and the Federal Reserve Board of San Francisco found that census tracts that receive NMTC investments have, on average, non-white populations totaling 47 percent - compared with an average of 26 percent for all census tracts nationwide. Further analysis by the CDFI Fund has revealed that, through 2007, over \$4.1 billion (or over 45 percent of the \$8.96 billion invested by CDEs through 2007) was invested in census tracts where non-white populations exceeded 50 percent of the total population. In 2007, the most recent year for which the CDFI Fund has transaction-level data, over 51 percent of the dollars invested by CDEs were invested in census tracts with majority non-white populations.

My point here is that many non-minority CDEs are extremely successful at working with minority communities. One such example is Stonehenge Community Development LLC, which has received three NMTC awards totaling \$287.5 million. Stonehenge has formed strategic alliances with groups such as the National Urban League, the National Association of Black Hotel Owners, and the National Minority Development Council to target minority-owned businesses and other high-impact projects in minority communities. Stonehenge has used its NMTC allocation to finance an African-American owned car dealership in Lake Charles, Louisiana that suffered severe damage in the wake of Hurricane Rita; a social service center in San Antonio Texas; a health center in Kansas City Missouri; and an African- American led social service agency in New Jersey. All of these projects serve severely distressed communities with majority minority populations.

One project that really interested me, due to its historical significance, is the International Civil Rights Center and Museum in downtown Greensboro, North Carolina, which is in Congressman Watt's district. Stonehenge helped finance this \$23 million dollar project, which included the conversion of the 1929 Woolworth store that was the site of the historic 1960 sit-in that helped launch the national civil rights movement. Stonehenge's role in the construction of this museum is significant, as there was a shortfall between what was raised through fundraising and the actual cost of the project. NMTCs were identified as the only source of funding that could keep the project on schedule while retaining the confidence of the investors and other supporters.

Stonehenge is of course just one of many CDEs that have significantly contributed to the economic wellbeing of distressed minority communities. The Massachusetts Housing Investment Corporation, a certified CDFI that has received four awards totaling \$435 million, made a NMTC investment in the Holyoke Health Center in Chicopee, Massachusetts, in Congressman Neal's district. Holyoke Health Center serves over 16,000 patients annually, the majority of whom are Hispanic. More than 80 percent of

the health center's patients live at or below the Federal Poverty Level and all of the health center's patients live below 200 percent of the Federal Poverty Level. The NMTC financing helped the lender to finance the health center at below market rates, saving the borrower \$88,000 in interest expense annually. This savings allows the health center to devote more of its cash flow to direct care of its patients.

Rockland Trust CDE, a community bank headquartered in Rockland, Massachusetts, has received two NMTC awards totaling \$75 million, and has made several investments benefiting minority populations in Congressman Frank's district. Most notable amongst these were a loan to support a minority-owned beauty supply business headquartered in Brockton, Massachusetts; a loan to support a minority-owned medical practice in Taunton, Massachusetts; and a real estate loan that supports a Latino health clinic in Brockton, Massachusetts.

In Columbus, Ohio, ESIC New Markets Partners, partnered with the Columbus Housing Partnership to construct and rehabilitate up to 700 affordable housing units. The entire project used \$9.5 million in NMTCs and has leveraged \$19 million in project related costs. The homes are targeted for households earning less than 80 percent of the area median income and are located in communities throughout Columbus.

I point out these specific projects not only for the Members of this Committee, but to demonstrate that NMTC projects and high-impact community benefits are occurring all over the country, even in our own backyards. For example, here in Washington, DC, NMTC investments have been used to finance charter schools with populations that are 100 percent minority; minority-owned businesses; a community and cultural center in a neighborhood where 93 percent of the residents are African-American; and, in that same neighborhood, a shopping center anchored by a Giant supermarket.

The construction of this grocery store is notable because for almost ten years, residents of this neighborhood had been without a supermarket. Those who did not have cars would either have to carpool to the closest supermarket with friends, find a bus, or rely on the neighborhood convenience stores for food. This project has had several positive community impacts, including the addition of 375 construction and 175 permanent jobs. Finally, the new supermarket is one of Washington DC's largest Giants, providing residents with ready access to affordable fresh food.

Next Steps

I would now like to turn to the ways we can work together to increase participation by minority-owned CDEs in the NMTC Program. The CDFI Fund is committed to ensuring that the pool of CDE awardees represents a diversity of institutional types, and that minority CDEs are assured fair access to these scarce resources. To this end, the CDFI Fund will focus on the following initiatives:

1. **Continued outreach to minority-owned CDEs.** The CDFI Fund has been actively seeking to promote participation by minority-owned CDEs since the

program's inception. Most notably, we have conducted multiple outreach sessions with the National Banker's Association (NBA), a trade association of minority-owned financial institutions, and with the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation's Minority Depository Institution Program, and participated at the Native American Finance Officers Association conference.

Upon release of the 2009 NMTC application materials, we reached out to the NBA, the Minority Business Roundtable, and the National Black Chamber of Commerce and offered to set up conference calls with their members. Just last month, the CDFI Fund presented information about the NMTC Program at a national conference sponsored by the Department of Commerce's Minority Business Development Agency. The CDFI Fund intends to continue to vigorously pursue these outreach and training opportunities, to ensure that minority institutions are aware of the benefits of the NMTC Program, and are given every opportunity to apply for allocation awards.

2. **Solicitation of public comments.** Another component that is connected to our outreach efforts is incorporating public feedback into our work. Later this summer, the CDFI Fund will be soliciting comments pertaining to the NMTC allocation application and related implementation matters. As part of this solicitation of public comments, the CDFI Fund will ask for comments specifically pertaining to how it can expand the participation of minority-owned and controlled CDEs in the NMTC allocation process.
3. **Continued dialogue with Congress.** The CDFI Fund has always been responsive to instructions from Congress regarding the NMTC program priorities. The authorizing statute indicated that a preference was to be given to organizations with a track record of working in disadvantaged communities, and a preference as well to organizations that would invest in "unrelated entities" – entities that they would not control through ownership. Congress later instructed the CDFI Fund to ensure that a proportionate amount of investments are made in rural communities. In response to direction from Congress on these three issues, the CDFI Fund included specific protocols within its application process to ensure that Congressional intent was being satisfied. The CDFI Fund very much looks forward to continued dialogue with Congress to improve the effectiveness of the NMTC Program.

Conclusion

The CDFI Fund is committed to giving support to communities and financial institutions. We have a wide variety of programs that reach America's most underserved and underinvested communities. Our mission is not only to ensure that we serve these communities, but that we also maintain the integrity and competitiveness of these programs. I hope that through our current and new outreach efforts we will be better able to reach a greater audience of potential awardees and also encourage greater collaboration with organizations and federal agencies that serve minority populations. The NMTC

Program has been a tremendous success in low-income and minority communities throughout the country, and I am confident that it will continue to be so in the future.

Never before in the history of the CDFI Fund have we been in such a strong position to be able to support and serve minority communities. Thank you for inviting me here today.