



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO
PRESS RELEASE

Ethics Commission

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**ETHICS COMMISSION ANNOUNCES SETTLEMENT
WITH COMMUNITY HOUSINGWORKS
CONCERNING VIOLATIONS OF LOBBYING LAWS**

Stacey Fulhorst, Executive Director of the City of San Diego Ethics Commission, announced today the Commission's approval of a stipulated settlement agreement with Community HousingWorks. Community HousingWorks, a registered organization lobbyist, has agreed to pay a fine of \$1,500 for failing to timely register as a lobbyist in 2008, and failing to timely file two quarterly disclosure reports.

Ms. Fulhorst explained that Community HousingWorks did not register as an organization lobbyist until December of 2008, even though it met the registration threshold of 10 lobbying contacts within 60 calendar days in April of 2008. In addition, Community HousingWorks did not file its second and third quarterly disclosure reports until December of 2008, despite the fact that the reports were due in July and October respectively. According to Ms. Fulhorst, "The timely disclosure of compensated efforts to influence municipal decisions is the foundation of the City's Lobbying Ordinance." She added that, in this case, the late registration and disclosure reports deprived the public of timely information regarding the company's efforts to secure Community Development Block Grant [CDBG] funding as well as its efforts to secure financing from the Redevelopment Agency and the Housing Commission for development of an affordable housing project.

Ms. Fulhorst noted that, as a result of the Commission’s extensive education and outreach efforts regarding the City’s new lobbying laws that went into effect on January 1, 2008, Community HousingWorks was aware of its need to register as an organization lobbyist in April of 2008. She pointed out, however, that Community HousingWorks ultimately registered and filed disclosure reports on its own initiative. In so doing, the company essentially self-reported its violations, a “substantial factor in mitigation” according to Ms. Fulhorst.

The Commission Chairman, Richard Valdez, characterized the failure to timely file lobbyist registration forms and quarterly disclosure reports as “serious violations” but concurred with Ms. Fulhorst concerning the mitigating circumstances. He noted that “the fine would have been substantially higher” if Community HousingWorks had not come forward on its own and filed its late registration and disclosure reports.

Ethics Commission fines are paid to the City of San Diego’s General Fund. The stipulated settlements approved by the Commission resolve all factual and legal issues without the necessity of holding an administrative hearing.

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