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State Honors Habitat's Maureen Howard with *Friend of Housing* Award

Tacoma, Wash. — On Oct. 20, Maureen Howard, executive director of Habitat for Humanity of Washington State, was honored for her outstanding service in expanding affordable housing resources for the benefit of Washington's low-income residents.

Before an audience of 350 colleagues, Maureen Howard accepted a *Friend of Housing* Award from the Washington State Housing Finance Commission. The *Friend of Housing* Reception and Award Ceremony took place at the Hotel Murano in Tacoma as part of the *Housing Washington 2010* conference on affordable housing.

"Maureen is committed to strengthening communities and the quality of life for the economically challenged," said Kim Herman, executive director of the Commission. "She spent the last two decades advocating for housing and collaborating on partnerships to assist the homeless, disabled, and low-income families and communities. We are delighted to honor her with the statewide recognition she deserves."

Howard's work in Washington state began in 1982 when she served as the executive director of the Martin Luther King Ecumenical Center in Tacoma's Hilltop neighborhood. During her tenure, she designed and implemented the Continuum of Care for Homeless People, which led to a shelter and the direct daily support for 600 homeless men, women, and children.

In 1984, Howard was a founding member and co-president of the Washington State Coalition for the Homeless where she continued her work for the homeless on both the state and national levels.

During the past seven years, Howard has been working with Habitat for

Humanity of Washington State. There, she has continued her work as an advocate for affordable housing. She has managed the activities of this statewide organization and developed resources and programs that benefit the 36 local Habitat for Humanity affiliates throughout Washington.

In this role, she provides technical training and assistance, and advocates on their behalf for affordable housing within the state.

She works with stakeholders to ensure that the State of Washington maintains its commitment to homeownership for very low-income households through the collaborative redesign of the State Housing Trust Fund homeownership program. She also designed a statewide *Sustainable Building Program* to encourage local Habitat affiliates to build to a recognized sustainable building standard.

Over the years Howard has been an expert guest lecturer or keynote speaker for international and regional conferences on homelessness, rural housing, shelter networks, and low-income housing. She has also made numerous TV and radio appearances.

In 2008, Maureen presented "Mainstream Green", the first sustainable building conference for nonprofit homeownership organizations and designed the *Habitat Sustainable Builder* seminar series.

Maureen also currently serves as a member of:

- The Washington State Housing Trust Fund Policy Advisory Team,
- Habitat for Humanity International U.S. Council Finance and Resource Development Committee, and
- The Washington Low Income Housing Alliance Federal Committee.

She is a past member of the Washington Low Income Housing Alliance State Legislative Committee and past co-chair of the Homeownership Committee.

“Through her work and volunteer positions, Maureen has demonstrated an extraordinary vision and exemplary leadership in advocating for affordable housing in Washington,” said Maureen Fife, chief executive officer, Habitat for Humanity of Tacoma/Pierce County who nominated Howard for this award. “Her enduring service

has directly impacted the creation of legislation and other programs that serve the poor, disabled, and homeless people of Washington. Habitat is proud of her.”

Washington State Housing Finance Commission

Washington State Housing Finance Commission is a publicly accountable, self-supporting agency dedicated to increasing housing access and affordability and to expanding the availability of quality community services for Washington state residents.

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