

**Written Statement of  
Ron Sims  
Before the Committee on Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs  
United States Senate  
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Thank you Mr. Chairman, Senator Shelby and distinguished members of the committee.

I am honored and humbled by the decision of President Obama and Secretary Donovan to nominate me as deputy secretary of Housing and Urban Development. I want to thank the committee for making time in your busy schedules to provide this opportunity for us to share our thoughts and views regarding housing and urban development at this critical time in our country.

For over twelve years, I have been proud to serve as the elected Executive of the nation's 14th largest county, managing an annual budget of \$5 billion and a workforce of 14,000 employees, delivering local and regional services to 1.8 million people.

Throughout my career, I have championed regional efforts to develop affordable and supportive housing, end homelessness, improve blighted neighborhoods and create opportunities for home ownership. But I've also balanced those priorities with the

need to reduce congestion, improve mobility, protect our environment, and address inequities and injustices in our region.

President Obama, Secretary Donovan, and Congress have all voiced a clear expectation that HUD can and must now step up to unprecedented levels of leadership in America's national recovery.

The roles facing HUD today include stabilizing the housing market, alleviating homelessness, creating healthy housing stock and vibrant and sustainable urban and rural communities. To do this, HUD must take a collaborative approach and work to leverage federal action in other agencies including, Transportation, Treasury, Energy, and Health and Human Services as well as the Environmental Protection Agency.

This inter-agency leadership will only be possible if HUD as an organization is fully functional and focused on meaningful and measurable outcomes.

I am ready for the challenge put before me by President Obama and Secretary Donovan to bring transformational change to HUD. I believe that my management experience in King County, and

our standing as a world-class regional government can serve as a relevant model for HUD.

It has not always been easy, but with many large organizations dramatic reform in areas like information technology and human resources, is sorely needed. And by creating a cross-disciplinary team orientation, and providing managers with effective tools and support, we have worked together to set King County on the right course.

More recently, King County has institutionalized a system of data-driven management that brings evidence to decision-makers when they need it most. We have published these results through an award-winning report that underscores our commitment to accountability and transparency.

And, we have looked beyond the silos of our government organization to help us in achieving results. At King County, we have built strategic partnerships, similar to the “national network of partners” Secretary Donovan outlined in his confirmation testimony. I believe deeply in the power of this vision – working with a range of local governments, housing authorities,

foundations, non-profits and private developers, who will join HUD in implementing its priorities

Like our departments in King County, HUD's organization must work – and it must serve not simply as a pass-fail bureaucracy. It must be a creative engine of ideas, actions and tools -- in which employees, partners and our customers are all empowered to implement a shared vision of the future.

In sum, we must be ready with a smoothly-running organization at all levels – from local to federal leaders - to take on the challenges that are before us. HUD must be accountable, transparent and effective as a major agent of oversight for TARP, and a primary decision-maker in how Recovery Act funds will be spent. We must ease the foreclosure crisis and lay the foundation for homeownership affordability and stability. And we must chart a course for a new Sustainable Communities vision – one in which our urban and rural areas are more vibrant, sustainable and resilient.

Mr. Chairman, Senator Shelby, and members of the Committee, thank you again for the opportunity to speak with you today. I firmly believe that under Secretary Donovan's leadership, and

with ongoing input from Congress, we can transform HUD into a catalyst for economic opportunity and ensuring every American a decent, safe, and suitable living environment.