



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Sue Walitsky (Cardin) 202-224-4524 or
Melissa Schwartz (Mikulski) 202-228-1122
September 16, 2008

CARDIN, MIKULSKI ANNOUNCE FUNDS TO IMPROVE SUBSTANDARD HOUSING IN EASTERN SHORE COUNTIES

WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Senators **Benjamin L. Cardin** and **Barbara A. Mikulski** (**both D-MD**) today announced that the USDA Rural Development has awarded Shore Up!, Inc. a \$35,378 grant to remove substandard housing conditions in Wicomico, Worcester and Somerset counties.

“The poor state of our economy has squeezed many homeowners to the brink of their budgets, forcing them to choose between daily expenses and the very upkeep of their homes,” said **Senator Cardin**. “I am proud of grants like this that will make it possible for low-income homeowners in Wicomico, Worcester and Somerset Counties to properly repair their homes, maintain their stake in the American Dream and boost the entire community.”

“I am committed to looking out for the day-to-day needs of Marylanders,” said **Senator Mikulski**. “This grant will mean safer and sturdier homes for more Wicomico, Worcester and Somerset County residents. I will continue to fight in the U.S. Senate for grants like these that support Maryland communities.”

These funds will enable Salisbury-based Shore Up!, Inc. to provide grants, low-interest or deferred loans to low-income homeowners in Wicomico, Worcester and Somerset counties to repair their homes and remove substandard living conditions. Shore Up!, Inc. is a Community Action Partnership that works to empower families to reach their fullest potential, maintain long-term independence and become economically self sufficient.

The median incomes of residents in Wicomico, Worcester and Somerset counties are \$43,797, \$46,768, and \$32,753, respectively, each well below the state average. House values in these counties average about \$99,033, which is \$46,967 below the state average.

The Rural Development program was created to improve the economy and quality of life in rural America. The program helps support essential services, infrastructure improvements and promotes economic development.

##