



INTERNATIONAL
ASSOCIATION
OF OFFICIAL
HUMAN RIGHTS
AGENCIES

REPLY TO:

April 6, 2007

Via Facsimile: 202-663-4110

Naomi Earp, Chair
Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
1801 L. Street, NW
Washington, D. C. 20507

Re: Meeting to set FEPA Funding

James L. Stowe
President
Columbus, OH 43215
(614) 645-1993

Vanessa Ruiz Boling
First Vice President
Fort Worth, TX 76102
(817) 871-7534

Rocco J. Claps
Second Vice President
Chicago, IL 60601
(312) 814-6245

Paula M. Haley
Secretary
Anchorage, AK 99501
(907) 276-7474

Homer C. Floyd
Treasurer
Harrisburg, PA 17101
(717) 787-4410

Beverly L. Watts
Immediate Past President
Louisville, KY 40202
(502) 595-4024

Washington D.C. Office
444 North Capitol, N.W.
Suite 536
Washington, D.C. 20001
(202) 624-5410

Dear Chair Earp,

It is my understanding that on Friday April 6, 2007 the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission will meet to discuss and vote on a proposed FEPA Funding plan for FY 2007.

I write on behalf of the International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies to express our great disappointment in the proposal you will consider at that meeting.

As you know Congress designated State and Local programs as a key component in the fight against employment discrimination in this country. Congressional intent for the involvement of State and Local agencies was further emphasized by adding State and Local agencies as a line item in the budget of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. In every budget of EEOC since the beginning of the program every dollar set aside for the State and Local programs has gone to the those programs without fail albeit often with a great deal of negotiation and compromise on the allocation of those same funds.

It is clear then that Congress has from the very beginning intended to have State and Local agencies strategically involved in the fight against employment discrimination with adequate funding for the implementation of those efforts. In the most recent budget for FY 2007, Congress appropriated \$32,577,600 for State and Local programs and keeping with past practice and we believe Congressional intent, we fully expect to receive all of the funding due to the FEPAs.

Specifically:

We reject the proposal of the FY 2007 Budget Plan of \$30,000,000 for State and Local programs and \$2,577,600 to be redirected to EEOC and urge you to further review this proposal and push for full funding as appropriated for the FEPAs.

Should the Commission choose to move forward we urge the "set aside" of the \$2,577, 600 for FEPAs who may perform at 100% of their contract and other essential enforcement activities.

We feel strongly that using EEOC agency discretion with FEPA funds has always been contemplated by EEOC which is in direct opposition to the partnership role we have jointly constructed and cultivated. We believe that removing vital funding from FEPAs particularly where Congress has appropriated such funds further erodes the mutual trust we have worked so hard to establish.

We are aware that EEOC is directed through the Office of Management and Budget to take the course that is before the Commission for vote, we believe however that the Congressional intent should dictate the action taken by the Commission.

We appreciate your efforts and understand the possible difficulty of your deliberations and decisions concerning this matter.

I would respectfully ask that this letter be entered into the record of the Commission at your Friday April 6, 2007 meeting.

Sincerely,

Jim Stowe

James L. Stowe