



ARISE

P.O. Box 778, Alamo, Texas 78516

Director Diana R. Serna  
Urban County Program  
427 E. Duranta Ave., Suite 107  
Alamo, TX 78516

September 2, 2015

Dear Director Serna,

It is with deep regret ARISE sends this letter to you and the CDBG program which has funded some of ARISE's work in the South Tower community of Precinct 2 over the past several years. Two weeks ago, Sr. Rose attended a specially called meeting at your offices regarding the revised certification process. We understand agencies will need to provide documentation for 20% of the beneficiaries of our programs based on the 2015 Adjusted Home Income Limits in this current grant year.

After a great deal of discussion and reflection, ARISE would like to return the awarded amount of \$10,000. ARISE holds trust with the community and the community trusts ARISE. Over the years, our residents have questioned why we would need to ask for income verification and we told them the county needed documentation to give to HUD being accountable for the funding it receives. There seemed to be a fear as to what might happen to the information, but the residents did provide us with the information. Now, with having to present copies of documentation regarding income amounts and sources, residents have expressed feelings of uncomfortableness and oppression and it would appear as ARISE was the oppressor. It is ARISE mission to help the community help itself, not to oppress the very people we are called to serve.

In our discussion, ARISE staff talked about trying to obtain documentation for 20% of our residents, but it does not seem right to us to ask some of the community for information we are not asking from all of the people we serve. We also wonder what will happen with this documentation if next year it will be 40%, and on up until people with no documented income receive no services at all. So, after much thought, we came to the decision to return the funds and recommend the money we are not using be used to fund the colonia street light effort. We understand there is need of money for this important necessity in our colonias. This way the funds will be used directly for the intention for which it was made.

Please let us know if we need to do anything further to void our contract. We appreciate the working relationship we have had with you and your office staff over the years.

Sincerely,

Lourdes Flores  
President

Sr. Rose Weidenbenner, RSM  
Grant & Administrative Support

cc: Commissioner Eduardo "Eddie" Cantu  
Napoleon D. Coca, UPC Coordinantor

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