



Oregon

Theodore R. Kulongoski, Governor

Housing and Community Services



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Oregon Housing and Community Services Director Victor Merced Appoints Deputy Director

Salem, Oregon (October 5, 2006) – Victor Merced, Director of Oregon Housing and Community Services (OHCS), announces the appointment of Rick Crager as Deputy Director for the Department.

Governor Kulongoski appointed Rick Crager as Acting Director of OHCS on February 17, 2006, when Bob Repine moved to the Oregon Economic and Community Development Department as its new Director. The Governor tapped Crager for this key position because of his strong leadership skills and critical role in developing the Department's marketing initiatives, new programs and related strategic plan goals. The Governor appointed Merced as OHCS Director on August 10, and Merced assumed leadership of the agency on September 5, 2006.

Merced commented that “Rick has shown exceptional leadership for this department over the past 6 months as Acting Director and Interim Deputy Director. His expertise, experience and commitment to our agency will further our goals to provide more affordable housing opportunities and services for low-income Oregonians. Rick has been invaluable in successfully transitioning the leadership for OHCS and I look forward to his continued support as Deputy Director.”

As Acting Director, Crager maintained his responsibilities as Interim Deputy Director and Chief Financial Officer until the Department of Administrative Services completed its recruitment for OHCS's new director. Crager provided the management oversight for all bond financing, accounting, budgeting, contracting, and general business administration. In addition, he was responsible for the development and execution of the department's strategic plan and performance measures. Crager lead the legislative team responsible for developing new legislative concepts, responding to bills affecting department operations or housing and community service issues, and representing the agency before legislative committees. Crager serves in a leadership role in various marketing initiatives, develops and implements new programs and related administrative rules. He also serves as liaison with the Governor and the legislature's policy advisors on key issues and proposals.

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Crager has served as Chief Financial Officer for the Department since July 2000. Prior to that he served as the Department's Financial Services and Investment Portfolio Manager. Before joining OHCS in 1998, Crager worked as an Accounting and Budget Manager with the Oregon Commission on Children and Families, and as Staff Accountant for the Oregon State Marine Board. OHCS will begin recruiting for a new Chief Financial Officer immediately.

OHCS is the State's housing finance agency and community services program administrator. The Department provides financial and program support to create and preserve opportunities for quality, affordable housing for Oregonians of lower and moderate income and administers federal and state antipoverty, homeless, energy assistance and community service programs. The OHCS mission is to "Reach out for opportunities to create partnerships that improve Oregonians' lives and the quality of our communities." For more information, visit our website at www.ohcs.oregon.gov.