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DHCD UNDERSECRETARY JENNIFER MADDOX HONORED FOR INITIATIVE HELPING 50,000 FAMILIES AVOID EVICTION

SMALL BUSINESS COALITION MEMBERS RECOGNIZED

BOSTON, MA – November 16, 2021, *Jennifer Maddox, Undersecretary of the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), received the 2021 LISC Community Impact Award in recognition of her leadership of the statewide Eviction Diversion Initiative. The award was presented by Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) Boston.*

Maddox, who assumed leadership of DHCD in February 2020 just weeks before the onset of the pandemic, was honored for her effective housing leadership through the crisis, and specifically for preventing widespread evictions after expiration of the legislative moratorium ended in October of 2020. The **Eviction Diversion Initiative** led by Maddox and her team provides deep assistance to tenants and landlords, including funding for rent and overdue utilities with state and federal funding, as well as free and low-cost legal aid and professional mediation services to help households avoid evictions. Through October of this year, **more than 50,000 unique households had received \$360 million** to avoid eviction, and **eviction filings and executions continue to remain below pre-pandemic levels. Housing and Economic Development Secretary Mike Kennealy** credits Maddox for these outcomes: “You don’t get these kinds of results without a leader with incredible vision, compassion, commitment, and desire to improve the lives of others, with a tenacity – quiet tenacity in Jennifer’s case – to get things done and make things better.”

The award was presented to Maddox by **Rachel Heller, Chief Executive Officer of Citizens Housing and Planning Association (CHAPA)**, who called Maddox the epitome of grace under fire, stating that, “Because of her leadership, Massachusetts is a leader in the nation, helping people to avoid evictions and ensuring that rent is paid so that people stay stable in their homes, and landlords and neighborhoods also remain stable.”

Accepting the award, Maddox said, “I have an incredible team backing me up at DHCD – dedicated public servants who have solved problems that were considered impossible before Covid-19. We’ve worked with regional agencies, legal aid organizations and community mediation partners, and brought on expert assistance, to fundamentally transform how we deliver housing assistance and keep people in their homes.”

The Eviction Diversion Initiative team includes hundreds of support staff at DHCD, regional housing agencies, legal aid organizations, and community mediation organizations. Maddox has

steered DHCD through the process of administering emergency assistance; providing hundreds of millions of emergency support to shelters, public housing, municipalities, and community foundations; and scaling rental and mortgage assistance to families from \$20 million per year to more than \$40 million a month.

SMALL BUSINESS COALITION MEMBERS RECOGNIZED

The statewide **Massachusetts Equitable PPP Access Initiative** was also honored by LISC for its dedicated and coordinated assistance to businesses owned by people of color in the wake of the pandemic. The coalition of community development financial institutions, banks, business support organizations, foundations, and other supporting partners formed to provide timely and equitable access to forgivable Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loans for underbanked businesses and historically disadvantaged and underserved demographic groups, including businesses owned by women and people of color. The coalition includes more than 200 people. Together they provided support to over 3,000 small businesses and helped nearly 1,000 of them to access approximately \$15 million in PPP loans, laying a foundation for broader coalition work accessing state small business grants and launching the permanent **Coalition for an Equitable Economy**. The **2021 LISC Community Leadership Award** was presented by **Karen Kelleher, Executive Director of LISC Boston**, and accepted by coalition co-leader **Glynn Lloyd, Executive Director of the Foundation for Business Equity and Mill Cities Community Investments**. Secretary Kennealy congratulated the coalition, stating that “This Coalition – these partners – literally saved thousands of companies across Massachusetts,” and noting the Baker-Polito Administration’s desire to keep working with the coalition to make the systemic changes needed to create the equitable economy we want in Massachusetts.

The announcements were made at the 2021 LISC Story Slam, which took place Wednesday, November 10, 2021– virtually and at the **Artists for Humanity Epicenter in South Boston**. The annual event celebrates community development in Massachusetts and the people who inspire, advance and lead it, by lifting up their stories and their work. The event was hosted by writer and storytelling maven **Theresa Okokon**, who co-hosts the nationally televised *Stories from the Stage* on WGBH, and featured personal stories told by **Jodi-Tatiana Charles, Maria Espinosa, Donald Osgood, Sr. and Zahirah Truth**.

LISC (Local Initiatives Support Corporation) – LISC is an investor, capacity builder, advisor, convener and an innovator. With residents and partners, LISC forges resilient and inclusive communities of opportunity across America – great places to live, work, visit, do business and raise families. LISC is the largest community development financial institution in the country, but has deep roots in Massachusetts, where it opened its first local office in 1981, and has invested over \$414 million. LISC Boston prioritizes equity in all its investments and initiatives, and works with local leaders to invest in housing, health, small business, public safety, climate justice and employment in communities throughout the Commonwealth. For more, visit www.lisc.org/Boston

Jennifer Maddox – Jennifer Maddox is the Undersecretary of the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), a \$2 billion agency that provides leadership, professional assistance and financial resources to promote safe, decent affordable housing opportunities, economic vitality of communities, and services and shelter to homeless populations. Previously, Ms. Maddox served as the Chief Financial and Administrative Officer for DHCD. Ms. Maddox has been with DHCD for over 20 years and has demonstrated extraordinary leadership in the

restructuring of fiscal operations within the Department and was instrumental during the integration of the Emergency Assistance shelter system from the Department of Transitional Assistance to DHCD, which doubled DHCD's operating budget. In 2015, Ms. Maddox received the Manuel Carballo Governor's Award for Excellence in Public Service for fiscal consolidation at the Department to meet agency-wide operational demands. Previously, Ms. Maddox was the Assistant Budget Director for the MA House Ways & Means Committee where she prepared recommendations for the state budget, emergency and capital relief legislation, analyzed budget proposals and policy issues. She is a graduate of La Salle University in Philadelphia.

The Massachusetts Equitable PPP Access Initiative – The Massachusetts Equitable PPP Access Initiative is a coalition formed to provide timely and equitable access to forgivable federal loans from the U.S. Small Business Administration under the Paycheck Protect Program (PPP) for underbanked businesses and historically disadvantaged and underserved demographic groups, including businesses owned by women and people of color. The coalition includes community development financial institutions, banks, business support organizations, foundations, and other supporting partners.

The Coalition for an Equitable Economy - The Coalition for an Equitable Economy is a broad cross-sector coalition of stakeholders from across the state aligned around a shared commitment to building an equitable small business ecosystem and to the values of racial equity, collaboration, and shared leadership. The coalition is committed to creating an equitable and inclusive small business ecosystem in Massachusetts, to achieve racial and ethnic parity in business ownership by the end of 2030. For more visit www.maequitableconomy.org

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