

HUD budget would cut overlapping programs

by UPI

WASHINGTON - The U.S. Housing and Urban Development Department budget will increase funding to programs while eliminating redundancy and waste, President Barack Obama said.

Obama unveiled his budget outline for fiscal year 2010 Thursday.

HUD's projected budget provides full funding for the Community Development Block Grant program at \$4.5 billion, as well as reforming the CDBG program to better target economically distressed communities.

An Affordable Housing Trust Fund would be capitalized and launched by a \$1 billion allocation. The program would develop, rehabilitate and preserve affordable housing designated for the very low income housing; help prevent homelessness and strengthen families.

The Housing Choice Voucher program, which similarly serves very low income households, would see an increase in funding. HUD officials would seek legislation to address the program's inefficiencies, the budget document said.

Two programs would be deleted in the 2010 HUD budget. The Section 108 Community Development Loan Guarantees Program and the American Dream Downpayment Initiative because they duplicated portions of larger programs that achieved similar results, the budget document said. The Section 108 program activities

will continue to be eligible under the community block grant program

The budget would create a new Energy Innovation Fund to catalyze private-sector investment in energy

efficiency in the nation's housing stock. It also would create the Choice Neighborhoods Initiative that would allow for investments in high-poverty neighborhoods where public and assisted housing is concentrated.

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