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For immediate release
October 15, 2007

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Tenant Resource Center to cut office hours and statewide toll-free renters' hotline

Tenant Resource Center (Madison) learned early last week that its funding for the statewide toll-free rental rights and responsibilities hotline will not be renewed by the U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for the upcoming year. Because of the timing of HUD's fiscal year, October 1 to September 30, the Tenant Resource Center must discontinue this statewide toll-free service effective immediately. The cut amounts to over \$41,000, approximately 20% of TRC's current funding from government sources and 13% of the 2007 budget overall.

Unfortunately this cut, along with a previous loss of \$55,000 in funding from the UW-Madison Student Services Finance Committee, will also impact local housing counseling, outreach and education services. **Hours of availability will be reduced through the end of the year. TRC will now close at 4:00 p.m. each weekday except Wednesday. On Wednesdays TRC will continue to remain open until 6:00 p.m.** As a result of these reductions phone calls may take longer than usual to return. **All e-mail questions are also currently suspended** until a decision about services is made at the beginning of November.

People outside Dane County in need of information should refer to TRC's website at www.tenantresourcecenter.org. Those wishing to volunteer or donate can do so through the website at http://www.tenantresourcecenter.org/volunteer_donate/ or by attending the TRC's Twelfth Annual Fall Benefit held on Friday, October 26, 5:00-7:00 p.m. at the Brink Lounge, 701 E. Washington Ave., in Madison.

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1202 Williamson Street, Suite A, Madison, WI 53703

Housing Counseling Line: 608.257.0006 or 877.238.RENT(7368) toll-free from outside of Dane County

Housing Mediation Service: 608.257.2799 **Administrative Office:** 608.257.0143 Fax: 608.286.0804

Email: asktrc@tenantresourcecenter.org office@tenantresourcecenter.org Website: <http://www.tenantresourcecenter.org/>

Housing Help Desk: 608.242.7406 Fax: 608.242.7490 1819 Aberg Avenue, Madison, WI 53704

Email: housinghelpdesk@tenantresourcecenter.org



“At this time we are extremely disappointed, but have no choice other than to at least temporarily discontinue the toll-free hotline and cut back our hours. This means that the thousands of renters we help each year from outside of Dane County won’t get the information they need about their rights in regard to evictions, repairs and more, and that it will be harder for people to stop by our office” said Brenda Konkel, Executive Director.

“We need to focus on building community-based financial support so we can, hopefully, re-open the toll-free hotline by the beginning of November and restore our hours by the first of the year. We are delaying a decision on a permanent shut-down until November 1st and will only keep the hotline open if we see a significant commitment to funding it into the future,” Konkel continued. Tenant Resource Center has pursued additional funding sources for this statewide program since its inception, enduring annual cuts and supplementing the program through fundraising efforts, but currently does not have enough funding to fill the void caused by this cut.

This service provides information about rental rights and responsibilities to tenants and landlords throughout Wisconsin. The most common problems discussed are eviction, repairs, security deposits and other consumer protections for tenants and landlords. There are no other organizations in Wisconsin that provide free rental housing counseling to the entire state.

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