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Leahy, a senior member of the Senate Appropriations Committee and of its transportation and housing subcommittee, which handles NeighborWorks' budget, helped create Vermont's first NeighborWorks organization in 1993 through a grant to Rutland West NHS, currently NeighborWorks of Western Vermont. During last year's budget negotiations, Leahy fought to retain NeighborWorks funding. He points out that Vermont community-based groups leverage annual NeighborWorks grants to provide a wide variety of housing-related services -- from affordable housing development to homeownership counseling to revolving loan funds and alternative mortgage solutions for Vermonters struggling to find homes for their families. After Irene, Vermont's NeighborWorks organizations also have helped homeowners and renters navigate the Small Business Administration disaster loan process. NeighborWorks America provided separate grants to assist with these activities. These centers continue to offer help to homeowners coping with complicated financial situations after Irene, under previous NeighborWorks grants. Vermonters can learn more about these services by calling 1-888-MY VT HOME or 1-888-698-8466. Leahy said, "Vermont's NeighborWorks organizations continue to do more with less, helping in countless ways with some of the most vexing housing decisions and situations that Vermonters are facing, especially after Irene."

Sanders said, "I'm very pleased to see Vermont's five NeighborWorks organizations recognized for their excellent track records in revitalizing neighborhoods, rehabilitating existing and building new affordable housing, and improving energy efficiency through weatherization. These new federal funds will help provide high quality housing counseling to Vermonters, including homebuyer assistance, foreclosure prevention, and help for households affected by Tropical Storm Irene."

“This is great news,” Welch said. “As Vermonters continue to struggle through a tough economy and with the effects of Tropical Storm Irene, these organizations are providing a much-needed helping hand. I’m pleased they will be able to continue doing this important work.”