

## LARSON ANNOUNCES \$700,000 FEDERAL GRANT FOR HARTFORD YOUTHBUILD PROGRAM

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: December 14, 2004

LARSON ANNOUNCES \$700,000 FEDERAL GRANT FOR HARTFORD YOUTHBUILD PROGRAM

HARTFORD- U.S. Congressman John B. Larson (CT-1) today announced that Co-Opportunity Inc. of Hartford has been awarded a \$700,000 federal grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to fund its YouthBuild community development program. The YouthBuild program offers job training, education, counseling, job replacement and leadership development opportunities to unemployed and out-of-school young adults, ages 18-24, through involvement in the construction and rehabilitation of affordable housing in their community.

“Hartford’s YouthBuild program has been a tremendous success and I am thrilled that we have secured this funding to enable them to continue their work,” said Larson. “The program gives young people in Hartford skills they need to practice a trade and enhances their academic and leadership abilities. YouthBuild is a great asset to Hartford and it provides a terrific opportunity for the young men and women involved.”

“YouthBuild offers young men and women who have not always made the best choices, an opportunity to get on track and get into a good paying career,” said Donna Taglianetti, Executive Director Co-opportunity, Inc. “It is a chance for them to see that they can make a positive difference in their community.”

The funding announced today will allow 60 young people from Hartford to enroll in YouthBuild between 2004 and 2006.

YouthBuild USA recently conducted a study of program graduates and found that 90% of Hartford graduates were employed within three months of the programs completion and 76% were receiving no government support. In addition 100% were involved in at least one community-oriented activity and 81% were registered to vote.

In October of this year, Larson wrote to the Secretary of the Department of Housing and Urban Development urging that the funding be awarded to Co-Opportunity Inc. for YouthBuild.

###