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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**10,000 MORE LOW-INCOME FAMILIES TO RECEIVE HOUSING ASSISTANCE
SECTION 8 OPEN ENROLLMENT PERIOD ENDS**

OAKLAND, CA, February 20, 2006—The Oakland Housing Authority (OHA) is pleased to announce that 10,000 new families are being enrolled in OHA's Housing Choice Voucher program. Also known as "Section 8," the Housing Choice Voucher program allows very low-income families, the elderly, and disabled to lease safe, decent, and affordable housing from private landlords.

OHA held an open enrollment period for Section 8 from January 23rd to February 3rd. Public announcements and meetings, print and radio advertisements, and direct mailings were used to promote the opening and distribute applications. The Authority also partnered with over 60 community and non-profit groups, the City of Oakland and its network of Libraries to recruit needy families to apply.

The response was overwhelming. Over 42,200 valid applications were submitted, including over 19,000 on-line applications via the Authority's website. An astounding 30 percent of the families that live or work in Oakland and qualify for the program responded to the outreach campaign and submitted applications. An independent consultant was hired to collect and process the applications, and a lottery was held among the applicant families to create a wait list that OHA could reasonably expect to serve in the next two to three years. The Authority estimated that number to be 10,000 new families. All 10,874 of OHA's vouchers are currently in use.

A family that is issued a Housing Choice Voucher can rent any apartment or house anywhere in Oakland when the owner agrees to participate in the program. If the rental unit meets OHA standards of health and safety, the family enters in to a lease agreement with the landlord. The family will contribute approximately 30% of their monthly income to pay the rent. The remainder of the rent is paid directly to the landlord by OHA on behalf of the family. Families earning less than 50 percent of the area's median income were eligible to apply. For example, a family of four may earn up to \$41,400 and be eligible for the Housing Choice Voucher program.

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