Housing Since I was elected to Congress, I have been working to help hardworking American families avoid losing their homes through default or foreclosure. Expanding homeownership opportunities has also become an integral part of my legislative agenda.

KEEPING HOOSIER FAMILIES IN THEIR HOMES Over the last year, our ongoing foreclosure crisis has devastated thousands of families in countless neighborhoods across Indianapolis. This year could be worse, with nearly 3,000 Indianapolis families having lost their homes in the last in January and February alone.

If immediate action is not taken, an estimated 49,400 Hoosier households could fall into foreclosure by the end of 2009.

In order to help those Americans struggling to make ends meet in our turbulent housing market, I co-authored and aggressively pushed for the passage of the American Housing Rescue and Foreclosure Prevention Act.

This $300 billion housing aid package will ensure the availability of more affordable home loans and drastically increase the number of affordable rental units.

This landmark bill will also allow homeowners to escape dangerous subprime, adjustable rate mortgages by refinancing with low fixed-rate loans, which are provided at no cost to the American taxpayer.

In an effort to ensure that Indianapolis homeowners have all available information, I also successfully introduced a provision that requires individuals in danger of foreclosure to be

identified and notified if they are eligible for refinancing to more stable loans.

This year, I also joined my colleagues in the House to pass the Helping Families Save Their Homes Act.

When enacted, this legislation will permit bankruptcy judges to extend repayment periods, reduce interest rates and principals, and otherwise adjust mortgage terms to help keep struggling families in their homes.

This legislation takes a balanced approach by protecting lenders from lawsuits when they make reasonable loan modifications, reducing fees that have long discouraged lenders from voluntarily altering loan terms,
and ensuring that homeowners pursue every possible option to avoid bankruptcy proceedings
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IMPROVING URBAN COMMUNITIES

Recently, there has been a dramatic spike in the number of vacant, foreclosed homes that have depreciated property values and compromised the safety of our communities.

In response, I supported legislation that provides grants and loans to states to purchase and rehabilitate vacant, foreclosed homes and convert them into affordable rental units.

The Seventh Congressional District of Indiana will receive $20.9 million dollars in assistance to rebuild dilapidated vacant homes and revitalize our neighborhoods.

PREVENTING HOMELESSNESS

In a given year, 3.5 million people are likely to experience homelessness, 1.35 million of which are children.

Concerned about these staggering figures, I have taken a lead on homeless issues since coming to Congress.

Last year, I pushed the Homeless Emergency and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act, originally introduced by Congresswoman Julia Carson, through the House Financial Services Committee.

This bill represented significant changes to the HUD homeless programs through increased funding and by expanding the definition of homeless to ensure more children and families have access to the critical resources provided by the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Programs.

While the HEARTH Act was not enacted into law in the 110th Congress it will likely be reintroduced this year.

I look forward to once again supporting this important piece of legislation.

Homelessness among children is also a major national concern.

Earlier this year, the National Center on Family Homelessness released a report revealing that one in fifty American children experience homelessness each year.

In Indiana alone, this equates to more than 13,000 children who will go to bed without a permanent home at some point in 2009.

Also this year, I worked with my colleagues in the House to introduce H.R. 29, the Homeless Children and Youth Act of 2009. This legislation will ensure that homeless children and their families have access to the critical support services that many of them are currently ineligible for under HUD's rules.