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For Immediate Release
December 10, 2008

**Opportunity Finance Network Honors Senator Jack Reed with
Congressional Champion Award for Creating the Capital Magnet Fund**
*Pioneering Advocate Lauded for Dedication to Economic Development
in Underserved Communities*

NEW YORK – Opportunity Finance Network (OFN), the leading national network of high-performance community development financial institutions (CDFIs), today announced **Democratic Senator Jack Reed of Rhode Island** is the recipient of its **Congressional Champion Award**. Senator Reed, a senior member of the Senate Banking Committee, was honored for his pioneering contributions to affordable housing and economic development in underserved communities and for developing and promoting the Capital Magnet Fund.

The Capital Magnet Fund provides federal grants to leverage private capital for low-income housing and to increase investment to the development, preservation, and revitalization of low-income communities. It is the most important source of new funding for CDFIs for the last 15 years.

CDFIs include community development banks, credit unions, loan funds, and venture capital funds. They are market-based, private sector financial intermediaries that create opportunities for low-wealth and low-income individuals and institutions and spark growth in hard-to-serve markets across the nation.

“The journey that brought us the Capital Magnet Fund began several years ago, and Senator Reed has been with us every step of the way,” said Mark Pinsky, President and CEO of OFN.

The Congressional Champion Award recognizes federal legislators who have demonstrated leadership in supporting opportunity finance and recognizing CDFIs as a sound investment of federal resources.

“Senator Reed understands the importance of CDFIs to the nation’s financial and housing systems, and his commitment to bringing opportunity finance into discussion and policy change has made him the industry’s greatest advocate,” Pinsky noted.

For years, Senator Reed has championed legislation that addresses the needs of middle-class families who are struggling with the fallout from the housing crisis by working to establish a national affordable housing trust fund.

“As we move forward, I think we have much to learn from this experience, including how connected our housing markets and are capital markets have become. Safe, decent, affordable housing should not just be the *American Dream*, it should be the **American Promise**,” Reed said.



Reed's trailblazing work presents a valuable boost for CDFIs and nonprofit affordable housing developers, who will be able to apply for funding if they can show it will increase investment in the development, preservation, rehabilitation, and purchase of affordable housing for low-income families. According to Reed, there are basically two funding streams in the affordable housing trust fund. First, there is a formula to distribute to states, and second is the Capital Magnet Fund.

The funding will be used to create and support financial programs that will dramatically increase investments in low-income housing, such as revolving loan funds, risk-sharing loan programs, loan-loss reserves, and affordable housing trust funds at the local level.

OFN lauded Reed's pioneering advocacy work in the creation of the Capital Magnet Fund and for his faith in CDFIs. According to OFN, Senator Reed's recognition that CDFIs have a unique ability to operate in these underserved markets and to leverage limited federal dollars makes him the industry's most dedicated advocate.

About Opportunity Finance Network (OFN): OFN is the leading national network of more than 160 financial institutions, creating growth that is good for communities, investors, individuals, and the economy. To date, the opportunity finance industry has financed more than \$25 billion in underserved markets in all 50 states, yielding more than **200,000 jobs, 500,000 housing units, and 5,000 community facility projects**. More information is available at: www.opportunityfinance.net.

To interview Mark Pinsky, President & CEO of the Opportunity Finance Network, please contact Jeanine Plant at 212.245.0510 or jplant@pro-mediacomunications.com.

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