



Greetings from the Office of Tribal Administrator, Leon Jacobs, of the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina. As one of the defenders of the Lumbee Constitution and of tribal programs, I write this editorial to dispel and provide accurate information concerning mortgage assistance provided to a tribal member who is currently seated on the Tribal Council.

Leon Jacobs, Tribal Administrator

First let me state, for those who would question, I have a signed release authorizing the following disclosure from tribal member David Carter, also Tribal Representative for District 3.

Mortgage assistance was provided to Councilor Carter through the Tribe's Acquisition Program. The purpose of this program, as outlined by policy, is to assist members who cannot qualify for a conventional loan or mortgage with a local mortgage lender. The purchase of foreclosures is permissible under the types of acquisitions allowed.

Now for the facts of the Carter acquisition. The 2005 median income guidelines for a family of four are \$46,400. Carter with his adjusted gross income, allowable by federal law, is below the median income guideline for his household size. The median income guideline is a national guideline based on the overall income for a geographical area that allow for deductions for childcare and medical expenses. This guideline includes more than Robeson County and although the limits may look high for salaries and income for the local area, remember this is a regional income level figured by the national government.

Next I would like to distinguish and correct the misconception about the sign in the tribal lobby that states there are 1862 applicants ahead of you. This figure is the famous "waiting list" for rehabilitation or repair and emergency services. The list for acquisition assistance is only 20. Acquisition policy says the list will be selected by seniority dates, with consideration for the number of members in household, and the housing need, with emergency needs being addressed on a case-by-case basis. Carter received no preferential treatment with consideration to his application.

Carter applied on August 24, 2005 and had an interest rate of 11.5%. During that time the current prime rate was approximately 6.5%. As you can see, Carter, like many of our tribal members was a victim of predatory lending. Predatory lending practices like this are the purpose for the federal and tribal Section 184 lending programs. All tribal members who receive mortgage assistance make payments to re-pay the Tribe either through the Section 184 program or the Acquisition Program. The Tribe using the State of North Carolina foreclosure law and procedures forecloses upon anyone who does not make their payments in a timely manner.

Since cases for this program can be reviewed on a case-by-case basis, let us review other circumstances of facts concerning this application. Carter was hospitalized and treated at Duke Hospital on three occasions for an extended illness that resulted in three operations. This extenuating circumstance, with the addition of a high, predatory lending interest rate made Carter's case a perfect example and now promotional tool for this program.

The Administration diligently reviews all applications prior to service being rendered to insure that all regulations both tribally and federally are met. It is my hope that others in similar circumstances will contact the Tribal Office to find out more about the Section 184 programs and other tribal services offered by the Lumbee Tribe to assist members with affordable, decent and safe housing opportunities.

Sincerely,

Leon Jacobs, Tribal Administrator



Housing

(910) 522-5189

Office of Energy Assistance

(910) 522-5160

Office of Tribal Clerk

(910) 521-2843

Office of Veterans Affairs

(910) 522-2210

Tobacco Cessation

(910) 522-2220

Youth Services

(910) 522-2217

Boys & Girls Club of the Lumbee Tribe

(910) 522-9005

707 Union Chapel Road
Pembroke, NC

www.LumbeeTribe.com