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\$10 million for home buyers on the way

*By Stephen D. Price
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Florida communities will share in \$10 million in funding for affordable housing, less than intended because of declining state revenue.

The Florida Housing Finance Corporation Board approved the funds Friday.

Florida now has about \$243 million in the affordable housing trust fund; money from fees on documentary stamps. Last year Rep. Gary Aubuchon, R-Cape Coral, helped pass a bill to provide the down-payment assistance to local governments that lowered or eliminated impact fees.

"By reducing impact fees (local governments) encourage new construction while the down-payment assistance helps move more properties," Aubuchon told the FHFC. "I hope this sets an example for other governments to compensate and think in this progressive way."

Stephen Auger, executive director of the FHFC, called the effort "experimental" and said, "We're grateful for this support."

Originally, \$20 million was appropriated for the program, but that was reduced to \$10 million during the budget-cutting special legislative session earlier this year.

Aubuchon said he will try to get more during this year's session despite the hardship of declining state revenue.

"We're turning over every rock looking for additional funding," he said. "I'm keeping every door open and every possibility out there."

Among the areas getting money for low-income families are:

- Charlotte County, \$2 million
- Pensacola, \$2 million
- Leon County, \$1.5 million
- Gadsden County, \$800,000
- Wakulla County, \$500,000
- Franklin County, \$350,000