

**HARTFORD** – Connecticut’s distressed homeowners have another opportunity to explore loan modification and foreclosure prevention options with their banks at a day-long, state-sponsored forum Tuesday, July 10, at the University of Connecticut in Storrs.

The mortgage assistance event, the third sponsored by the state in what has become a national model, was announced at a news conference today by Attorney General George Jepsen and Banking Commissioner Howard F. Pitkin. They were joined by U.S. Rep. Joe Courtney, whose 2<sup>nd</sup> Congressional District includes much of eastern Connecticut.

“For families struggling through the daunting process of mortgage modification, actually sitting down, one-on-one, with a representative provides a chance to cut through the red tape,” **said Rep. Courtney.**

“Mortgage assistance events like this one will help not only hard-working homeowners, but also eastern Connecticut’s fragile real estate market.”

Governor Dannel P. Malloy, whose office is sponsoring the event with the Attorney General and Department of Banking, called it “an excellent opportunity for any distressed homeowner to sit down with their mortgage lender, talk about their situation and determine the best strategy going forward. Having the conversation is the first step, and we hope that the information homeowners receive at the event will help them stay in their homes.”

Attorney General Jepsen said that previous state-sponsored events in Hartford and Bridgeport have helped many residents across Connecticut get answers they need to move forward, even if they do not qualify for modifications.

“While not everyone will qualify for a loan modification, these events, overall, have been highly successful because we are getting hundreds of people to meet with representatives of their banks. They are able to jump-start or expedite their loan review and come away with a name and a number to call – a single point of contact – as they continue the process,” **the Attorney General said.**

“These events have become a national model for other states.”

Commissioner Pitkin encouraged state residents, particularly those in eastern Connecticut, to take advantage of the upcoming program in Storrs. “This is our third Mortgage Assistance Event to date,” **said Commissioner Pitkin.** “Connecticut homeowners who are having difficulties with their mortgage may learn about state and federal resources that may be available to help their situation. Those who are unable to attend can get help through the Department’s Foreclosure Assistance Hotline. The hotline number is 1-877-472-8313.”

The mortgage assistance forum is scheduled from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. at the University of Connecticut Student Union in Storrs. Free parking is available in the South Parking Garage. Parking tickets will be validated at the event.

Among the banks sending representatives are: Bank of America; Chelsea Groton Bank; Citibank; First Niagara Bank; GMAC Mortgage; HSBC National Bank USA; Indymac/OneWest; JPMorgan Chase & Co.; McCue Mortgage; Ocwen Loan Servicing; People's United Bank; PNC Mortgage; Webster Bank; and Wells Fargo Bank. Also attending will be HUD-approved housing counselors, Connecticut Fair Housing Center attorneys, Judicial branch foreclosure mediators and representatives of Statewide Legal Services, The Workplace, Inc. and other state and non-profit agencies.

An estimated 1,500 people attended the mortgage servicing event in Hartford in November and 1,300 more were served in Bridgeport in March.

Connecticut’s event format has become a model for other states because it succeeds in bringing hundreds of mortgage customers together with their bank representatives in one day, state officials said. The events make it easy for homeowners to start the loan review process or to expedite it.

Others, who bring all the necessary paperwork, may get an answer the same day to their modification application. If additional paperwork is necessary, the homeowner comes away with a single point of contact to make sure that information gets to where it needs to be.

The goal is to get answers as quickly as possible for homeowners, so they can evaluate their options, make decisions regarding their homes or seek additional counseling.

More information about the Storrs event, including the information homeowners should bring to help them get answers quickly, is available at [www.ct.gov/dob/homeowner](http://www.ct.gov/dob/homeowner) , or by calling the Department of Banking at 860-240-8170 or 1-877-472-8313.

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