

Good afternoon. Thank you very much for the opportunity to be here and express my views and those of Twin Cities Neighborhood Housing Services and our affiliated partners.

For more than 20 years, Twin Cities NHS has been Rebuilding the American Dream, one home at a time. We help low and moderate-income families purchase a home...by arranging financing for families who might not qualify or even know how to get conventional mortgages...by providing home-buyer education to more than 1,100 first-time home buyers in 1997 alone...and by rehabilitating decaying neighborhoods, resulting in revitalized communities.

Yearly, we also sponsor NeighborWorks Week. A community beautification program that brings more than 400 volunteers together in various inner-city neighborhoods to make their communities better places to live.

We couldn't do any of it without partners like Norwest Bank. Our relationship with them goes back 20 years. Norwest and its predecessors have been there since the beginning, working with us, assisting low and moderate-income families.

Norwest plays a significant role in our lending efforts within the inner city. We work together in

true partnership to provide home ownership opportunities for families who might otherwise not qualify for conventional financing.

Norwest also supports us in the form of operating and program grants. They have already contributed more than \$500,000 to Twin Cities NHS in operating grants alone.

They also support us with a variety of mortgage and rehab loan products, designed specifically for our constituents. These products are necessary for the success of our mission.

Knowing that grants and loans are decided upon on a regional and local basis, is very important to us. We have no concern that philanthropic decision-making will change with either their headquarters or their name. Norwest's corporate-citizen philosophy and the trust we have in them, based on our experience, and are enough for us to feel very comfortable with this merger.

Norwest executives sit on our various boards and get involved. The corporation itself supports employee volunteer efforts throughout the year, and is another sign of being a great corporate partner and meeting the additional needs of area non-profits.

To reiterate and conclude, we truly believe this merger with Wells Fargo will be a good thing. Bringing Norwest's corporate-citizen philosophy to the merged organization will enhance the cultural differences with Wells that have been talked about.

Because of the leadership roles that it looks like Norwest will be taking with the merger...because of the "Outstanding" CRA rating Norwest has maintained...because of the continuation of regional and local philanthropic decision-making...and because of our history with Norwest Corporation, we strongly support their merger.