

sary in the public interest, should be taken in the least disruptive form and should remove impediments to private action, not supplant it * * *.

"* * * We submit, the private enterprise system of land development is producing a better overall result than would be obtained by Government operation, whether a local, State, or Federal Government * * *. The State land development agency proposal would do nothing to enhance the progress now being made by leading land developers and community builders, whose objectives and accomplishments get better each year, and whose ideas are now filtering down to all echelons of the industry. The proposal could, in fact, impede this progress * * *.

"In a democratic society, the proper method to improve land planning and use is by constant research, by education, and by self-criticism of the industry.

"Sound planning, like sound government, is best when broadly based, not imposed by controlling authority, no matter how motivated. The private entrepreneur, being market motivated, knows more about the problems involved and how to solve them within the bounds of economic feasibility than can ever be achieved through state ownership."

Our 1965 testimony appears at pages 552 and 553 of the hearings on H.R. 5840. We listed eight specific reasons why we were irrevocably against the proposal. We repeat and reaffirm that testimony. We urge the Congress to reject the "land agency" proposal so firmly as to preclude annual discussion of what we are convinced would, at one stroke, destroy the system of private ownership of land as we know it.

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Title IV of this bill would provide a system of grants for so-called urban information centers. It would be helpful to local communities to have available the type of program information contemplated but we believe it preferable that this information be available through the coordinators to be provided under section 7 of H.R. 12341. In our opinion centralization of such information in the coordinators would help avoid the proliferation of Federal sources to which local communities must resort to obtain information about housing programs.

ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS

I refer to attachment A, appended to this statement, for a detailed summary of our views on H.R. 11858 and H.R. 9256.

In addition, as attachment B, I submit a list of suggested amendments to the National Housing Act, together with the reasons for each. These would—

(1) Authorize FHA to insure mortgages on college housing. The substantial increase in the size of student bodies in our institutions of higher learning, and the prospect that this trend will continue, results in a demand for student housing which the Federal Government has long recognized in the form of direct loans on easy terms to assist in the construction of dwelling accommodations for students. By providing mortgage insurance, the Federal Government could, without substantial expenditure, greatly increase the assistance it is now providing for this purpose.

(2) Increase to \$35,000 the maximum permissible mortgage limits for single family homes under FHA section 203(b), section 222 (servicemen's program), and section 234 (home mortgage programs).

(3) Increase mortgage amounts under section 220 program for urban renewal areas to facilitate small rental projects.

(4) Increase from \$15,000 to \$20,000 the maximum loan FHA could insure for veterans without downpayment.

(5) Authorize FHA to insure mortgages on vacation homes.

(6) Increase the amount and term of title I property improvement loans.

(7) Facilitate construction of small rental projects by eliminating the cost certification requirement for projects of 24 units or less.

(8) Permit sale of urban renewal land for sales housing for low and moderate income families on the same reduced basis presently available for rental or cooperative housing.

(9) Reactivate the section 810 Armed Forces rental housing program.