

105TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. RES. 147

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the House of Representatives should participate in and support activities to provide decent homes for the people of the United States, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 13, 1997

Mr. LEWIS of California (for himself, Mr. GINGRICH, Mr. GEPHARDT, Mr. STOKES, Mr. LAZIO of New York, Mr. KENNEDY of Massachusetts, and Ms. NORTON) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Banking and Financial Services

RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the House of Representatives should participate in and support activities to provide decent homes for the people of the United States, and for other purposes.

Whereas the United States promotes and encourages the creation and revitalization of sustainable and strong neighborhoods in partnership with States, cities, and local communities and in conjunction with the independent and collective actions of private citizens and organizations;

Whereas establishing a housing infrastructure strengthens neighborhoods and local economies and nurtures the families who reside in them;

Whereas an integral element of a strong community is a sufficient supply of affordable housing;

Whereas such housing can be provided in traditional and nontraditional forms, including apartment buildings, transitional and temporary homes, condominiums, co-operatives, and single family homes;

Whereas for many families a home is not merely shelter, but also provides an opportunity for growth, prosperity, and security;

Whereas homeownership is a cornerstone of the national economy because it spurs the production and sale of goods and services, generates new jobs, encourages savings and investment, promotes economic and civic responsibility, and enhances the financial security of all people in the United States;

Whereas the United States is the first country in the world to make owning a home a reality for a vast majority of its families; however, more than one-third of the families in the United States are not homeowners;

Whereas a disproportionate percentage of non-homeowning families in the United States are low-income families;

Whereas the National Partners in Homeownership, a public-private partnership comprised of 63 national organizations under the leadership of the Department of Housing and Urban Development, has established a goal of reaching an all-time high homeownership level in the United States by the end of the 20th century;

Whereas there are many other nonprofit and for-profit organizations that, in partnership with the Federal Government and local governments, strive to make the American

dream of homeownership a reality for low-income families;

Whereas national organizations such as the Fannie Mae Foundation, Freddie Mac, the Local Initiatives Support Corporation, the Enterprise Foundation, the Housing Assistance Council, and the Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation, in conjunction with local organizations, have developed thousands of homes each year for low-income families and have, in the process, reduced urban decay and blight and fostered business activity;

Whereas the community building activities of neighborhood-based nonprofit organizations empower individuals to improve their lives and make communities safer and healthier for families;

Whereas one of the best known nonprofit housing organizations is Habitat for Humanity, which builds simple but adequate housing for less fortunate families and symbolizes the self-help approach to homeownership;

Whereas Habitat for Humanity provides opportunities for people from every segment of society to volunteer to help make the American dream a reality for families who otherwise would not own a home; and

Whereas the second week of June 1997 is National Homeownership Week: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That it is the sense of the House of Rep-
2 resentatives that—

3 (1) everyone in the United States should have
4 a decent home in which to live;

1 (2) the Members of the House of Representa-
2 tives should demonstrate the importance of vol-
3 unteerism;

4 (3) the Members of the House of Representa-
5 tives and Habitat for Humanity, with support from
6 the National Partners in Homeownership, should
7 sponsor and construct, commencing on June 5,
8 1997, two homes in the Anacostia neighborhood of
9 the District of Columbia, each to be known as a
10 “House That Congress Built”;

11 (4) each “House That Congress Built” should
12 be constructed primarily by Members of the House
13 of Representatives and their families and staffs, in-
14 volving and symbolizing the partnership of the pub-
15 lic, private, and nonprofit sectors of society;

16 (5) each “House That Congress Built” should
17 be constructed with the participation of the family
18 that will own the home;

19 (6) upon completion and initial occupancy of
20 the homes in the fall of 1997, the Members of the
21 House of Representatives, their families and staffs,
22 and local and national leaders from the public and
23 private nonprofit sectors of society should partici-
24 pate, together with each family that will own a

1 “House That Congress Built”, in an event to cele-
2 brate the occasion;

3 (7) in the future, the Members of the House of
4 Representatives and their families and staff should
5 participate in similar house building activities of
6 Habitat for Humanity in their own districts as part
7 of National Homeownership Week; and

8 (8) these occasions should be used to emphasize
9 and focus on the importance of providing decent
10 homes for all of the people in the United States.

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