

HOUSING SYMPOSIUM: RESPONSES TO URBAN HOUSING NEEDS

INTRODUCTION

The appearance of homeless Americans who live on city sidewalks, alleys, and shelters has triggered widespread research into the adequacy and affordability of the nation's housing.¹ In the 1980s the Reagan administration has supplanted low-income housing production programs with a largely symbolic voucher system² while middle-income Americans watch the cost of a first home become increasingly unaffordable.

Many local governments have responded to the crisis by adopting inclusionary housing programs that shift the burden of providing lower cost housing to private developers. Some cities compensate those developers by granting density bonuses. Robert Johnston's Article examines the use of density bonuses in several California communities. Cities such as Detroit, Michigan, and University City, Missouri, have attempted to ensure the adequacy of existing housing through code enforcement. Otto Hetzel's Article advocates enforcement programs that call for city inspection of living units at the time of sale or transfer. Finally, the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges Urban Housing Working Group offers a broad-ranging policy statement advocating a more effective federal housing role that recognizes the diversity of local problems and capitalizes on the energy of state and local governments, the business sector, and nonprofit groups.

This symposium examines potential and actual responses to the urban housing crisis at a time when the partnership between the federal

1. See, e.g., *Homeless Symposium*, in 31 WASH. U.J. URB. & CONTEMP. L. 137-99 (1987).

2. See Mallach, *The Fallacy of Laissez-Faire: Land Use Deregulation, Housing Affordability, and the Poor*, 30 WASH. U.J. URB. & CONTEMP. L. 35, 63 (1986).

government and state and local programs is being reexamined under the Bush administration. Senator Alan Cranston of California, for example, has called for new studies of the role the federal government plays in meeting the nation's housing needs. We hope this symposium will speed this reexamination.

The Editors