

HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ACT OF 1980: Sections 214, 216, 330, and Title VI

[Public Law 96-399, Enacted October 8, 1980]

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[Note: While this publication does not represent an official version of any Federal statute, substantial efforts have been made to ensure the accuracy of its contents. The official version of Federal law is found in the United States Statutes at Large and in the United States Code. The legal effect to be given to the Statutes at Large and the United States Code is established by statute (1 U.S.C. 112, 204).]**]**

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RESTRICTION ON USE OF ASSISTED HOUSING

SEC. 214. [42 U.S.C. 1436a] (a) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the applicable Secretary may not make financial assistance available for the benefit of any alien unless that alien is a resident of the United States and is—

(1) an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence as an immigrant as defined by sections 101(a)(15) and 101(a)(20) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101(a)(15) and 8 U.S.C. 1101(a)(20)), excluding, among others, alien visitors, tourists, diplomats, and students who enter the United States temporarily with no intention of abandoning their residence in a foreign country;

(2) an alien who entered the United States prior to June 30, 1948, or such subsequent date as is enacted by law, continuously maintained his or her residence in the United States since then, and is not ineligible for citizenship, but who is deemed to be lawfully admitted for permanent residence as a result of an exercise of discretion by the Attorney General pursuant to section 249 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1259);

(3) an alien who is lawfully present in the United States pursuant to an admission under section 207 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1157) or pursuant to the granting of asylum (which has not been terminated) under section 208 of such Act (8 U.S.C. 1158);

(4) an alien who is lawfully present in the United States as a result of an exercise of discretion by the Attorney General for emergent reasons or reasons deemed strictly in the public

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interest pursuant to section 212(d)(5) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1182(d)(5));

(5) an alien who is lawfully present in the United States as a result of the Attorney General's withholding deportation pursuant to section 241(b)(3) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1253(h));

(6) an alien lawfully admitted for temporary or permanent residence under section 245A of the Immigration and Nationality Act; or

(7) an alien who is lawfully resident in the United States and its territories and possessions under section 141 of the Compacts of Free Association between the Government of the United States and the Governments of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia (48 U.S.C. 1901 note) and Palau (48 U.S.C. 1931 note) while the applicable section is in effect: Provided, That, within Guam any any citizen or national of the United States shall be entitled to a preference or priority in receiving financial assistance before any such alien who is otherwise eligible for assistance.

(b)(1) For purposes of this section the term "financial assistance" means financial assistance made available pursuant to the United States Housing Act of 1937, Section 235, or 236 of the National Housing Act, the direct loan program under section 502 of the Housing Act of 1949 or section 502(c)(5)(D), 504, 521(a)(2)(A), or 542 of such Act, subtitle A of title III of the Cranston-Gonzalez National Affordable Housing Act, or section 101 of the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1965.

(2) If the eligibility for financial assistance of at least one member of a family has been affirmatively established under the program of financial assistance and under this section, and the ineligibility of one or more family members has not been affirmatively established under this section, any financial assistance made available to that family by the applicable Secretary shall be prorated, based on the number of individuals in the family for whom eligibility has been affirmatively established under the program of financial assistance and under this section, as compared with the total number of individuals who are members of the family.

(c)(1) If, following completion of the applicable hearing process, financial assistance for any individual receiving such assistance on the date of the enactment of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1987 is to be terminated, the public housing agency or other local governmental entity involved (in the case of public housing or assistance under section 8 of the United States Housing Act of 1937) or the applicable Secretary (in the case of any other financial assistance) shall take one of the following actions:

(A) Permit the continued provision of financial assistance, if necessary to avoid the division of a family in which the head of household or spouse is a citizen of the United States, a national of the United States, or an alien resident of the United States described in any of paragraphs (1) through (6) of subsection (a). For purposes of this paragraph, the term "family" means a head of household, any spouse, any parents of the head of household, any parents of the spouse, and any children of the head of household or spouse. Financial assistance contin-

ued under this subparagraph for a family may be provided only on a prorated basis, under which the amount of financial assistance is based on the percentage of the total number of members of the family that are eligible for that assistance under the program of financial assistance and under this section.

(B)(i) Defer the termination of financial assistance, if necessary to permit the orderly transition of the individual and any family members involved to other affordable housing.

(ii) Except as provided in clause (iii), any deferral under this subparagraph shall be for a 6-month period and may be renewed by the public housing agency or other entity involved for an aggregate period of 18 months. At the beginning of each deferral period, the public housing agency or other entity involved shall inform the individual and family members of their ineligibility for financial assistance and offer them other assistance in finding other affordable housing.

(iii) The time period described in clause (ii) shall not apply in the case of a refugee under section 207 of the Immigration and Nationality Act or an individual seeking asylum under section 208 of that Act.

(2) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the applicable Secretary may not make financial assistance available for the benefit of—

(A) any alien who—

(i) has a residence in a foreign country that such alien has no intention of abandoning;

(ii) is a bona fide student qualified to pursue a full course of study; and

(iii) is admitted to the United States temporarily and solely for purposes of pursuing such a course of study at an established institution of learning or other recognized place of study in the United States, particularly designated by such alien and approved by the Attorney General after consultation with the Department of Education of the United States, which institution or place of study shall have agreed to report to the Attorney General the termination of attendance of each nonimmigrant student (and if any such institution of learning or place of study fails to make such reports promptly the approval shall be withdrawn); and

(B) the alien spouse and minor children of any alien described in subparagraph (A), if accompanying such alien or following to join such alien.

(d) The following conditions apply with respect to financial assistance being or to be provided for the benefit of an individual:

(1)(A) There must be a declaration in writing by the individual (or, in the case of an individual who is a child, by another on the individual's behalf), under penalty of perjury, stating whether or not the individual is a citizen or national of the United States, and, if that individual is not a citizen or national of the United States, that the individual is in a satisfactory immigration status. If the declaration states that the individual is not a citizen or national of the United States and that

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the individual is younger than 62 years of age, the declaration shall be verified by the Immigration and Naturalization Service. If the declaration states that the individual is a citizen or national of the United States, the applicable Secretary, or the agency administering assistance covered by this section, may request verification of the declaration by requiring presentation of documentation that the applicable Secretary considers appropriate, including a United States passport, resident alien card, alien registration card, social security card, or other documentation.

(B) In this subsection, the term "satisfactory immigration status" means an immigration status which does not make the individual ineligible for financial assistance.

(2) If such an individual is not a citizen or national of the United States, is not 62 years of age or older, and is receiving financial assistance on the date of enactment of the Use of Assisted Housing by Aliens Act of 1996² or applying for financial assistance on or after that date, there must be presented either—

(A) alien registration documentation or other proof of immigration registration from the Immigration and Naturalization Service that contains the individual's alien admission number or alien file number (or numbers if the individual has more than one number), or

(B) such other documents as the applicable Secretary determines constitutes reasonable evidence indicating a satisfactory immigration status.

In the case of an individual applying for financial assistance on or after the date of enactment of the Use of Assisted Housing by Aliens Act of 1996³, the applicable Secretary may not provide any such assistance for the benefit of that individual before documentation is presented and verified under paragraph (3) or (4).

(3) If the documentation described in paragraph (2)(A) is presented, the applicable Secretary shall utilize the individual's alien file or alien admission number to verify with the Immigration and Naturalization Service the individual's immigration status through an automated or other system (designated by the Service for use with States) that—

(A) utilizes the individual's name, file number, admission number, or other means permitting efficient verification, and

(B) protects the individual's privacy to the maximum degree possible.

(4) In the case of such an individual who is not a citizen or national of the United States, is not 62 years of age or older, and is receiving financial assistance on the date of enactment of the Use of Assisted Housing by Aliens Act of 1996³ or applying for financial assistance on or after that date, if, at the time of application or recertification for financial assistance, the statement described in paragraph (1) is submitted but the doc-

² September 30, 1996.

³ September 30, 1996.

umentation required under paragraph (2) is not presented or if the documentation required under paragraph (2)(A) is presented but such documentation is not verified under paragraph (3)—

(A) the applicable Secretary—

(i) shall provide a reasonable opportunity, not to exceed 30 days, to submit to the applicable Secretary evidence indicating a satisfactory immigration status, or to appeal to the Immigration and Naturalization Service the verification determination of the Immigration and Naturalization Service under paragraph (3),

(ii) in the case of any individual receiving assistance on the date of enactment of the Use of Assisted Housing by Aliens Act of 1996, may not delay, deny, reduce, or terminate the eligibility of that individual for financial assistance on the basis of the immigration status of that individual until the expiration of that 30-day period; and

(iii) in the case of any individual applying for financial assistance on or after the date of enactment of the Use of Assisted Housing by Aliens Act of 1996, may not deny the application for such assistance on the basis of the immigration status of that individual until the expiration of that 30-day period; and

(B) if any documents or additional information are submitted as evidence under subparagraph (A), or if appeal is made to the Immigration and Naturalization Service with respect to the verification determination of the Service under paragraph (3)—

(i) the applicable Secretary shall transmit to the Immigration and Naturalization Service photostatic or other similar copies of such documents or additional information for official verification,

(ii) pending such verification or appeal, the applicable Secretary may not—

(I) in the case of any individual receiving assistance on the date of enactment of the Use of Assisted Housing by Aliens Act of 1996³, delay, deny, reduce, or terminate the eligibility of that individual for financial assistance on the basis of the immigration status of that individual; and

(II) in the case of any individual applying for financial assistance on or after the date of enactment of the Use of Assisted Housing by Aliens Act of 1996³, deny the application for such assistance on the basis of the immigration status of that individual; and

(iii) the applicable Secretary shall not be liable for the consequences of any action, delay, or failure of the Service to conduct such verification.

(5) If the applicable Secretary determines, after complying with the requirements of paragraph (4), that such an individual is not in a satisfactory immigration status, the applicable Secretary shall—

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(A) deny the application of that individual for financial assistance or terminate the eligibility of that individual for financial assistance, as applicable;

(B) provide that the individual may request a fair hearing during the 30-day period beginning upon receipt of the notice under subparagraph (C); and

(C) provide to the individual written notice of the determination under this paragraph, the right to a fair hearing process, and the time limitation for requesting a hearing under subparagraph (C).

(6) The applicable Secretary shall terminate the eligibility for financial assistance of an individual and the members of the household of the individual, for a period of not less than 24 months, upon determining that such individual has knowingly permitted another individual who is not eligible for such assistance to reside in the public or assisted housing unit of the individual. This provision shall not apply to a family if the ineligibility of the ineligible individual at issue was considered in calculating any proration of assistance provided for the family.

For purposes of this subsection, the term "applicable Secretary" means the applicable Secretary, a public housing agency, or another entity that determines the eligibility of an individual for financial assistance.

(e) The applicable Secretary shall not take any compliance, disallowance, penalty, or other regulatory action against an entity with respect to any error in the entity's determination to make an individual eligible for financial assistance based on citizenship or immigration status—

(1) if the entity has provided such eligibility based on a verification of satisfactory immigration status by the Immigration and Naturalization Service,

(2) because the entity, under subsection (d)(4)(A)(ii) (or under any alternative system for verifying immigration status with the Immigration and Naturalization Service authorized in the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 (Public Law 99-603)), was required to provide a reasonable opportunity to submit documentation, or

(3) because the entity, under subsection (d)(4)(B)(ii) (or under any alternative system for verifying immigration status with the Immigration and Naturalization Service authorized in the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 (Public Law 99-603)), was required to wait for the response to the Immigration and Naturalization Service to the entity's request for official verification of the immigration status of the individual, or the response from the Immigration and Naturalization Service to the appeal of that individual.

(f)(1) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no agency or official of a State or local government shall have any liability for the design or implementation of the Federal verification system described in subsection (d) if the implementation by the State or local agency or official is in accordance with Federal rules and regulations.

(2) The verification system of the Department of Housing and Urban Development shall not supersede or affect any consent agreement entered into or court decree or court order entered prior to the date of the enactment of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1987.

(g) The applicable Secretary is authorized to pay to each public housing agency or other entity an amount equal to 100 percent of the costs incurred by the public housing agency or other entity in implementing and operating an immigration status verification system under subsection (d) (or under any alternative system for verifying immigration status with the Immigration and Naturalization Service authorized in the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 (Public Law 99-603)).

(h) For purposes of this section, the term "applicable Secretary" means—

(1) the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, with respect to financial assistance administered by such Secretary and financial assistance under subtitle A of title III of the Cranston-Gonzalez National Affordable Housing Act; and

(2) the Secretary of Agriculture, with respect to financial assistance administered by such Secretary.

(i) **VERIFICATION OF ELIGIBILITY.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—No individual or family applying for financial assistance may receive such financial assistance prior to the affirmative establishment and verification of eligibility of at least the individual or one family member under subsection (d) by the applicable Secretary or other appropriate entity.

(2) **RULES APPLICABLE TO PUBLIC HOUSING AGENCIES.**—A public housing agency (as that term is defined in section 3 of the United States Housing Act of 1937)—

(A) may, notwithstanding paragraph (1) of this subsection, elect not to affirmatively establish and verify eligibility before providing financial assistance⁴

(B) in carrying out subsection (d)—

(i) may initiate procedures to affirmatively establish or verify the eligibility of an individual or family under this section at any time at which the public housing agency determines that such eligibility is in question, regardless of whether or not that individual or family is at or near the top of the waiting list of the public housing agency;

(ii) may affirmatively establish or verify the eligibility of an individual or family under this section in accordance with the procedures set forth in section 274A(b)(1) of the Immigration and Nationality Act; and

(iii) shall have access to any relevant information contained in the SAVE system (or any successor thereto) that relates to any individual or family applying for financial assistance.

⁴ So in law.

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(3) ELIGIBILITY OF FAMILIES.—For purposes of this subsection, with respect to a family, the term “eligibility” means the eligibility of each family member.

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FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE IN IMPACTED AREAS

SEC. 216. [42 U.S.C. 1436b] The Secretary of Housing and Urban Development shall not exclude from consideration for financial assistance under federally assisted housing programs proposals for housing projects solely because the site proposed is located within an impacted area. For the purposes of this section, the term “federally assisted housing programs” means any program authorized by the United States Housing Act of 1937, sections 235 and 236 of the National Housing Act, section 101 of the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1965, or section 202 of the Housing Act of 1959.

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MORTGAGE-BACKED SECURITIES PROGRAM

SEC. 330. [12 U.S.C. 1723a note] If the Federal National Mortgage Association submits to the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development or the Secretary of the Treasury, after the date of enactment of this section,⁵ a proposal with respect to undertaking a mortgage-backed securities program, the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development or the Secretary of the Treasury, as the case may be, shall, within 90 days after submission of such proposal, approve the proposal or transmit to the Congress a report explaining why the proposal has not been approved.

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TITLE VI—CONDOMINIUM AND COOPERATIVE CONVERSION PROTECTION AND ABUSE RELIEF

SHORT TITLE

SEC. 601. [15 U.S.C. 3601 note] This title may be cited as the “Condominium and Cooperative Abuse Relief Act of 1980”.

FINDINGS AND PURPOSE

SEC. 602. [15 U.S.C. 3601] (a) The Congress finds and declares that—

(1) there is a shortage of adequate and affordable housing throughout the Nation, especially for low- and moderate-income and elderly and handicapped persons;

(2) the number of conversions of rental housing to condominiums and cooperatives is accelerating, which in some communities may restrict the shelter options of low- and moderate-income and elderly and handicapped persons;

(3) certain long-term leasing arrangements for recreation and other condominium- or cooperative-related facilities which

⁵ October 8, 1980.

have been used in the formation of cooperative and condominium projects may be unconscionable; in certain situations State governments are unable to provide appropriate relief; as a result of these leases, economic and social hardships may have been imposed upon cooperative and condominium owners, which may threaten the continued use and acceptability of these forms of ownership and interfere with the interstate sale of cooperatives and condominiums; appropriate relief from these abuses requires Federal action; and

(4) there is a Federal involvement with the cooperative and condominium housing markets through the operation of Federal tax, housing, and community development laws, through the operation of federally chartered and insured financial institutions, and through other Federal activities; that the creation of many condominiums and cooperatives is undertaken by entities operating on an interstate basis.

(b) The purposes of this title are to seek to minimize the adverse impacts of condominium and cooperative conversions particularly on the housing opportunities of low- and moderate-income and elderly and handicapped persons, to assure fair and equitable principles are followed in the establishment of condominium and cooperative opportunities, and to provide appropriate relief where long-term leases of recreation and other cooperative- and condominium-related facilities are determined to be unconscionable.

CONVERSION LENDING

SEC. 603. [15 U.S.C. 3602] It is the sense of the Congress that lending by federally insured lending institutions for the conversion of rental housing to condominiums and cooperative housing should be discouraged where there are adverse impacts on housing opportunities of the low- and moderate-income and elderly and handicapped tenants involved.

DEFINITIONS

SEC. 604. [15 U.S.C. 3603] For the purpose of this title—

(1) “affiliate of a developer” means any person who controls, is controlled by, or is under common control with a developer. A person “controls” a developer if the person (A) is a general partner, officer, director, or employer of the developer, (B) directly or indirectly or acting in concert with one or more other persons, or through one or more subsidiaries, owns, controls, holds with power to vote, or holds proxies representing, more than 20 per centum of the voting interests of the developer, (C) controls in any manner the election of a majority of the directors of the developer, or (D) has contributed more than 20 per centum of the capital of the developer. A person “is controlled by” a developer if the developer (i) is a general partner, officer, director or employer of the person, (ii) directly or indirectly or acting in concert with one or more other persons, or through one or more subsidiaries, owns, controls, holds with power to vote, or holds proxies representing, more than 20 per centum of the voting interests of the person, (iii) controls in any manner the election of a majority of the directors, or (iv)

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has contributed more than 20 per centum of the capital of the person;

(2) "automatic rent increase clause" means a provision in a lease permitting periodic increases in the fee under the lease which is effective automatically or at the sole option of the lessor, and which provides that the fee shall increase at the rate of an economic, commodity, or consumer price index or at a percentage rate such that the actual increases in the rental payment over the lease term cannot be established with specificity at the time the lease is entered into;

(3) "common elements" means all portions of the cooperative or condominium project, other than the units designated for separate ownership or for exclusive possession or use;

(4) "condominium association" means the organization, whose membership consists exclusively of all the unit owners in the condominium project, which is, or will be, responsible for the operation, administration, and management of the condominium project;

(5) "condominium project" means real estate (A) which has five or more residential condominium units, in each residential structure, and the remaining portions of the real estate are designated for common ownership solely by the owners of those units, each owner having an undivided interest in the common elements, and (B) where such units are or have been offered for sale or sold, directly or indirectly, through the use of any means or instruments of transportation or communication of interstate commerce, or the mails;

(6) "condominium unit" means a portion of a condominium project designated for separate ownership;

(7) "conversion project" means a project, which has five or more residential units, which was used primarily for residential rental purposes immediately prior to being converted to a condominium or cooperative project;

(8) "convey or conveyance" means (A) a transfer to a purchaser of legal title in a unit at settlement, other than as security for an obligation, or (B) the acquisition by a purchaser of a leasehold interest for more than five years;

(9) "cooperative association" means an organization that owns the record interest in the residential cooperative property or a leasehold of the residential property of a cooperative project and that is responsible for the operation of the cooperative project;

(10) "cooperative project" means real estate (A) which has five or more residential cooperative units, in each residential structure, subject to separate use and possession by one or more individual cooperative unit owners whose interest in such units and in the undivided assets of the cooperative association which are appurtenant to the unit are evidenced by a membership or share interest in a cooperative association and a lease or other muniment of title or possession granted by the cooperative association as the owner of all the cooperative property, and (B) an interest in which is or has been offered for sale or lease or sold, or leased directly or indirectly, through use of

any means or instruments of transportation or communication in interstate commerce or of the mails;

(11) "cooperative property" means the real estate and personal property subject to cooperative ownership and all other property owned by the cooperative association;

(12) "cooperative unit" means a part of the cooperative property which is subject to exclusive use and possession by a cooperative unit owner. A unit may be improvements, land, or land and improvements together, as specified in the cooperative documents;

(13) "cooperative unit owner" means the person having a membership or share interest in the cooperative association and holding a lease, or other muniment of title or possession, of a cooperative unit that is granted by the cooperative association as the owner of the cooperative property;

(14) "developer" means (A) any person who offers to sell or sells his interest in a cooperative or condominium unit not previously conveyed, or (B) any successor of such person who offers to sell or sells his interest in units in a cooperative or condominium project and who has the authority to exercise special developer control in the project including the right to: add, convert, or withdraw real estate from the cooperative or condominium project, and maintain sales offices, management offices and rental units; exercise easements through common elements for the purpose of making improvements within the cooperative or condominium; or exercise control of the owners' association;

(15) "interstate commerce" means trade, traffic, transportation, communication, or exchange among the States, or between any foreign country and a State, or any transaction which affects such trade, traffic, transportation, communication, or exchange;

(16) "lease" includes any agreement or arrangement containing a condominium or cooperative unit owner's obligation, individually, collectively, or through an association to make payments for a leasehold interest or for other rights to use or possess real estate, or personal property (which rights may include the right to receive services with respect to such real estate or personal property), except a lease does not include mortgages or other such agreements for the purchase of real estate;

(17) "person" means a natural person, corporation, partnership, association, trust or other entity, or any combination thereof;

(18) "purchaser" means any person, other than a developer, who by means of a voluntary transfer acquires a legal or equitable interest in a unit, other than (A) a leasehold interest (including renewal options) of less than five years, or (B) as security for an obligation;

(19) "real estate" means any leasehold or other estate or interest in, over or under land, including structures, fixtures, and other improvements and interests which by custom, usage, or law pass with a conveyance of land though not described in the contract of sale or instrument of conveyance. "Real estate"

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includes parcels with or without upper or lower boundaries, and spaces that may be filled with air or water;

(20) "residential" means used as a dwelling;

(21) "sale", "sale of a cooperative unit" or "sale of a condominium unit" means any obligation or arrangement for consideration for conveyance to a purchaser of a cooperative or condominium unit, excluding options or reservations not binding on the purchaser;

(22) "special developer control" means any right arising under State law, cooperative or condominium instruments, the association's bylaws, charter of articles of association or incorporation, or power of attorney or similar agreement, through which the developer may control or direct the unit owners' association or its executive board. A developer's right to exercise the voting share allocated to any condominium or cooperative unit which he owns is not deemed a right of special developer control if the voting share allocated to that condominium or cooperative unit is the same voting share as would be allocated to the same condominium or cooperative unit were that unit owned by any other unit owner at that time;

(23) "State" includes the several States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and the territories and possessions of the United States; and

(24) "tenants' organization" means a bona fide organization of tenants who represent a majority of the occupied rental units in a rental housing project.

EXEMPTIONS

SEC. 605. [15 U.S.C. 3604] The provisions of this title shall not apply to—

(1) a cooperative or condominium unit sold or offered for sale by the Federal Government, by any State or local government, by any corporate instrumentality of the United States, or by any agency thereof;

(2) a cooperative or condominium project in which all units are restricted to nonresidential purposes or uses; or

(3) any lease or portion thereof—

(A) which establishes any leasehold or other estate or interest in, over or under land on or in which one or more residential condominium or cooperative units are located, the termination of which will terminate the condominium or cooperative project, or reduce the number of units in such project, or

(B) which establishes a leasehold interest in, or other rights to use, possess, or gain access to, a condominium or cooperative unit.

CONDOMINIUM AND COOPERATIVE CONVERSIONS

SEC. 606. [15 U.S.C. 3605] It is the sense of the Congress that, when multifamily rental housing projects are converted to condominium or cooperative use, tenants in those projects are entitled to adequate notice of the pending conversion and to receive the first opportunity to purchase units in the converted projects and

that State and local governments which have not already provided for such notice and opportunity for purchase should move toward that end. The Congress believes it is the responsibility of State and local governments to provide for such notice and opportunity to purchase in a prompt manner. The Congress has decided not to intervene and therefore leaves this responsibility to State and local governments to be carried out.

FEDERAL HOUSING ADMINISTRATION INSURANCE

SEC. 607. **[15 U.S.C. 3606]** Where an application for mortgage or loan insurance in connection with a conversion or purchase of a rental housing project being undertaken by a tenants' organization is submitted, the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development shall expedite the processing of the application in every way and shall make a final decision on such application at the earliest practicable time.

OPTIONAL TERMINATION OF SELF-DEALING CONTRACTS

SEC. 608. **[15 U.S.C. 3607]** (a) Any contract or portion thereof which is entered into after the effective date of this title, and which—

- (1) provides for operation, maintenance, or management of a condominium or cooperative association in a conversion project, or of property serving the condominium or cooperative unit owners in such project;
- (2) is between such unit owners or such association and the developer or an affiliate of the developer;
- (3) was entered into while such association was controlled by the developer through special developer control or because the developer held a majority of the votes in such association; and
- (4) is for a period of more than three years, including any automatic renewal provisions which are exercisable at the sole option of the developer or an affiliate of the developer, may be terminated without penalty by such unit owners or such association.

(b) Any termination under this section may occur only during the two-year period beginning on the date on which—

- (1) special developer control over the association is terminated; or
- (2) the developer owns 25 per centum or less of the units in the conversion project, whichever occurs first.

(c) A termination under this section shall be by a vote of owners of not less than two-thirds of the units other than the units owned by the developer or an affiliate of the developer.

(d) Following the unit owners' vote, the termination shall be effective ninety days after hand delivering notice or mailing notice by prepaid United States mail to the parties to the contract.

CIVIL ACTION; UNCONSCIONABLE LEASES

SEC. 609. **[15 U.S.C. 3608]** (a) Cooperative and condominium unit owners through the unit owners' association may bring an ac-

tion seeking a judicial determination that a lease or leases, or portions thereof, were unconscionable at the time they were made. An action may be brought under this section if each such lease has all of the following characteristics:

- (1) it was made in connection with a cooperative or condominium project;
- (2) it was entered into while the cooperative or condominium owners' association was controlled by the developer either through special developer control or because the developer held a majority of the votes in the owners' association;
- (3) it had to be accepted or ratified by purchasers or through the unit owners' association as a condition of purchase of a unit in the cooperative or condominium project;
- (4) it is for a period of more than twenty-one years or is for a period of less than twenty-one years but contains automatic renewal provisions for a period of more than twenty-one years;
- (5) it contains an automatic rent increase clause; and
- (6) it was entered into prior to June 4, 1975.

Such action must be authorized by the cooperative or condominium unit owners through a vote of not less than two-thirds of the owners of the units other than units owned by the developer or an affiliate of the developer, and may be brought by the cooperative or condominium unit owners through the units owners' association. Prior to instituting such action, the cooperative or condominium unit owners must, through a vote of not less than two-thirds of the owners of the units other than units owned by the developer or an affiliate of the developer, agree to enter into negotiation with the lessor and must seek through such negotiation to eliminate or modify any lease terms that are alleged to be unconscionable; if an agreement is not reached in ninety days from the date on which the authorizing vote was taken, the unit owners may authorize an action after following the procedure specified in the preceding sentence.

(b) A rebuttable presumption of unconscionability exists if it is established that, in addition to the characteristics set forth in subsection (a) of this section, the lease—

- (1) creates a lien subjecting any unit to foreclosure for failure to make payments;
- (2) contains provisions requiring either the cooperative or condominium unit owners or the cooperative or condominium association as lessees to assume all or substantially all obligations and liabilities associated with the maintenance, management and use of the leased property, in addition to the obligation to make lease payments;
- (3) contains an automatic rent increase clause without establishing a specific maximum lease payment; and
- (4) requires an annual rental which exceeds 25 per centum of the appraised value of the leased property as improved: *Provided*, That, for purposes of this paragraph "annual rental" means the amount due during the first twelve months of the lease for all units, regardless of whether such units were occupied or sold during that period, and "appraised value" means the appraised value placed upon the leased property the first

tax year after the sale of a unit in the condominium or after the sale of a membership or share interest in the cooperative association to a party who is not an affiliate of the developer. Once the rebuttable presumption is established, the court, in making its finding, shall consider the lease or portion of the lease to be unconscionable unless proven otherwise by a preponderance of the evidence to the contrary.

(c) Whenever it is claimed, or appears to the court, that a lease or any portion thereof is, or may have been, unconscionable at the time it was made, the parties shall be afforded a reasonable opportunity to present evidence at least as to—

- (1) the commercial setting of the negotiations;
- (2) whether a party has knowingly taken advantage of the inability of the other party reasonably to protect his interests;
- (3) the effect and purpose of the lease or portion thereof, including its relationship to other contracts between the association, the unit owners and the developer or an affiliate of the developer; and
- (4) the disparity between the amount charged under the lease and the value of the real estate subject to the lease measured by the price at which similar real estate was readily obtainable in similar transactions.

(d) Upon finding that any lease, or portion thereof, is unconscionable, the court shall exercise its authority to grant remedial relief as necessary to avoid an unconscionable result, taking into consideration the economic value of the lease. Such relief may include, but shall not be limited to rescission, reformation, restitution, the award of damages and reasonable attorney fees and court costs. A defendant may recover reasonable attorneys' fees if the court determines that the cause of action filed by the plaintiff is frivolous, malicious, or lacking in substantial merit.

(e) Nothing in this section may be construed to authorize the bringing of an action by cooperative and condominium unit owners' association, seeking a judicial determination that a lease or leases, or portions thereof, are unconscionable, where such unit owners or a unit owners' association representing them has, after the termination of special developer control, reached an agreement with a holder of such lease or leases which either—

- (1) sets forth the terms and conditions under which such lease or leases is or shall be purchased by such unit owners or associations; or
- (2) reforms any cause in the lease which contained an automatic rent increase clause, unless such agreement was entered into when the leaseholder or his affiliate held a majority of the votes in the owners' association.

PROHIBITIONS

SEC. 610. **[15 U.S.C. 3609]** Any provision in any lease or contract requiring unit owners or the owners' association, in any conversion project involving a contract meeting the requirements of section 608 of this title or in any project involving a lease meeting the requirements of section 609 of this title, to reimburse, regardless of outcome, the developer, his successor, or affiliate of the de-

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veloper for attorneys' fees or money judgments, in a suit between unit owners or the owners' association and the developer arising under the lease or agreement, is against public policy and void.

STATE AND LOCAL JURISDICTION

SEC. 611. **[15 U.S.C. 3610]** Nothing in this title may be construed to prevent or limit the authority of any State or local government to enact and enforce any law, ordinance, or code with regard to any condominium, cooperative, or conversion project, if such law, ordinance, or code does not abridge, deny, or contravene any standard for consumer protection established under this title. Notwithstanding the preceding sentence, the provisions of this title, except for the application of section 609 and the prohibition included in section 610 as it relates to a lease with respect to which a cause of action may be established under section 609, shall not apply in the case of any State or local government which has the authority to enact and enforce such a law, ordinance, or code, if, during the three-year period following the date of enactment of this title, such State or local government enacts a law, ordinance, or code, or amendments thereto, stating in substance that such provisions of this title shall not apply in that State or local government jurisdiction.

ADDITIONAL REMEDIES

SEC. 612. **[15 U.S.C. 3611]** (a) Unless otherwise limited as in section 608 or 609 of this title, any person aggrieved by a violation of this title may sue at law or in equity.

(b) In any action authorized by this section for a violation of section 608 or 610 where actual damages have been suffered, such damages may be awarded or such other relief granted as deemed fair, just, and equitable.

(c) Every person who becomes liable to make any payment under this section may recover contributions from any person who, if sued separately, would have been liable to make the same payment.

(d) The amounts recoverable under this section may include interest paid, reasonable attorneys' fees, independent engineer and appraisers' fees, and court costs. A defendant may recover reasonable attorneys' fees if the court determines that the cause of action filed by the plaintiff is frivolous, malicious, or lacking in substantial merit.

JURISDICTION

SEC. 613. **[15 U.S.C. 3612]** The district courts of the United States, the United States courts of any territory, and the United States District Court for the District of Columbia shall have jurisdiction under this title and, concurrent with State courts, of actions at law or in equity brought under this title without regard to the amount in controversy. Any such action may be brought in the district wherein the defendant is found or is an inhabitant or transacts business, or in the district where the sale took place, and process in such cases may be served in other districts of which the defendant is an inhabitant or wherever the defendant may be

found. No case arising under this title and brought in any State court of competent jurisdiction shall be removed to any court of the United States, except where any officer or employee of the United States in his official capacity is a party.

LIMITATION OF ACTIONS

SEC. 614. [15 U.S.C. 3613] No action shall be maintained to enforce any right or liability created by this title unless brought within six years after such cause of action, accrued, except that an action pursuant to section 609 must be brought within four years after the date of enactment of this title.

CONTRARY STIPULATIONS VOID

SEC. 615. [15 U.S.C. 3614] Any condition, stipulation, or provision binding any person to waive compliance with any provisions of this title shall be void.

ADDITIONAL REMEDIES

SEC. 616. [15 U.S.C. 3615] The rights and remedies provided by this title shall be in addition to any and all other rights and remedies that may exist under Federal or State law.

SEPARABILITY

SEC. 617. [15 U.S.C. 3616] If any provisions of this title or the application thereof to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of this title shall not be affected thereby.

EFFECTIVE DATE

SEC. 618. [15 U.S.C. 3601 note] The provisions of this title shall become effective upon enactment,⁶ except that section 609, and the prohibition included in section 610 as it relates to a lease with respect to which a cause of action may be established under section 609, shall become effective one year after enactment.

⁶The date of enactment was October 8, 1980.