

110TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. CON. RES. 392

Supporting the goal of increased and sustainable homeownership in the United States and recognizing the importance of homeownership programs, fair lending laws, and fair housing laws in achieving that goal.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 17, 2008

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida (for himself, Ms. KILPATRICK, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Mrs. MALONEY of New York, Mr. MEEK of Florida, Mr. DAVIS of Alabama, and Mr. BISHOP of Georgia) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Financial Services

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Supporting the goal of increased and sustainable homeownership in the United States and recognizing the importance of homeownership programs, fair lending laws, and fair housing laws in achieving that goal.

Whereas homeownership is vitally important to families in the United States in establishing financial independence;

Whereas homeownership is the most common means for families in the United States to build wealth for them and future generations;

Whereas in 2008 the homeownership rate for White Americans was 72 percent, but the rate was only 47.2 percent

for African-Americans and 49.7 percent for Hispanic Americans;

Whereas eliminating the disparity in homeownership rates between White families and minority families is a goal of critical importance and should become a national priority;

Whereas the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation, the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute, and the National Coalition for Asian Pacific American Community Development are actively engaged in advancing homeownership, financial literacy, and economic empowerment among African-Americans, Hispanic Americans, Asian Americans, Pacific Islanders, and other minorities;

Whereas the Fair Housing Act promotes neighborhood integration and prohibits housing discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, disability, familial status, or national origin;

Whereas although equal housing opportunity is a right guaranteed to all persons in the United States, the effort to eliminate discrimination in housing continues, with almost 4,000,000 fair housing violations occurring annually;

Whereas the policy of fair housing and equal opportunity is wholly consistent with the principles of equality and justice for all, the Congress must work to ensure and demand that fair housing is a reality for all persons in the United States;

Whereas the Community Reinvestment Act of 1977, the Equal Credit Opportunity Act, the Home Mortgage Disclosure Act of 1975, and the Fair Housing Act protect all people from discriminatory lending practices;

Whereas predatory lending is the use of abusive home mortgage lending practices, including lending that involves excessive fees, inappropriate penalties, and other unreasonable terms and lending that strips equity from the homeowner;

Whereas predatory lending practices are, unfortunately, much too common in the United States;

Whereas despite some achievements in reducing predatory lending, further measures are necessary to tackle the foreclosure crisis and discriminatory practices;

Whereas the absence of prime regulated banking institutions in minority neighborhoods creates a vacuum for predatory lenders to thrive;

Whereas predatory lenders target homeowners, particularly African-Americans, Hispanic Americans, Asian Americans, the elderly, and female-headed households;

Whereas predatory lenders often use high-pressure tactics to charge customers extremely high, unaffordable fees so that the borrower will eventually default on the loan and lose the home, and the lender will profit from the equity in the property;

Whereas although not all subprime lending is predatory, most predatory lending occurs primarily in the subprime market in the form of loans with cost add-ons, such as fees and penalties;

Whereas the rise in the overall foreclosure rate since 2006 reflects the large increase in subprime foreclosure rates;

Whereas African-Americans, Hispanic Americans, and Asian Americans are more likely to receive higher priced home purchase loans than similarly situated White borrowers even after controlling for such factors as income; and

Whereas the Congress recognizes that predatory loans made in the subprime market have not led to increases in sustainable homeownership among protected classes under the Fair Housing Act: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate*
 2 *concurring)*, That the Congress—

3 (1) fully supports the goal of increasing home-
 4 ownership among families in the United States;

5 (2) recognizes the importance of homeownership
 6 in families establishing financial independence;

7 (3) fully supports programs for first-time home-
 8 ownership, including the With Ownership, Wealth
 9 initiative of the Congressional Black Caucus Foun-
 10 dation, the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute
 11 National Housing Initiative, and initiatives of the
 12 National Coalition for Asian Pacific American Com-
 13 munity Development;

14 (4) urges the Federal Government and State
 15 and local governments—

16 (A) to take appropriate actions to encour-
 17 age homeownership and fair housing practices;

18 (B) to confront all forms of predatory
 19 lending with swift legislative action; and

20 (C) to fund private fair housing organiza-
 21 tions to protect and educate the public;

1 (5) recommits itself to making fair housing and
2 homeownership a legislative priority in the 110th
3 Congress; and

4 (6) urges the President to issue a proclamation
5 encouraging the people of the United States to ob-
6 serve National Fair Housing Month with appro-
7 priate ceremonies and activities.

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