

Procurement and Transplantation Network established under section 372 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 274).

SEC. 10. SUNSET PROVISION.

This Act shall be effective during the 5-year period beginning on the date of the enactment of this Act.

THE SPRAWLING OF AMERICA

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 2, 1999

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, people from across the nation are talking about ways they can make their communities more livable. Improving livability means better schools, safer neighborhoods, affordable housing and more choices in transportation. Improving livability also means preserving what makes each community unique, be it the farmlands in Oregon or the desert in Arizona. It is my pleasure to share with my colleagues the comments of Richard Moe, the president of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, on this important and timely topic.

THE SPRAWLING OF AMERICA: FEDERAL POLICY IS PART OF THE PROBLEM; CAN IT BE PART OF THE SOLUTION?

(An address by Richard Moe, president, National Trust for Historic Preservation at the National Press Club in Washington, DC on January 22, 1999)

America today is engaged in a great national debate. It's a debate about sprawl. The central question in the debate is this: Will we continue to allow haphazard growth to consume more countryside in ways that drain the vitality out of our cities while eroding the quality of life virtually everywhere? Or will we choose instead to use our land more sensibly and to revitalize our older neighborhoods and downtowns, thereby enhancing the quality of life for everyone?

The debate touches every aspect of our lives—the quality of the natural and built environments, how we feel about the places where we live and work and play, how much time we have for our family and civil life, how rooted we are in our communities. I believe that this debate will frame one of the most important political issues of the first decade of the 21st century. Ultimately, its outcome will determine whether the American dream will become a reality for future generations.

The National Trust for Historic Preservation, which I am privileged to serve, works to revitalize America's communities by preserving our heritage—the buildings, neighborhoods, downtowns and landscapes that link us with our past and define us as Americans. Our mission is summed up in a short phrase: "Protecting the Irreplaceable." Sprawl destroys the irreplaceable, which is why the National Trust is concerned about sprawl—and why I want to address the subject today.

Preservation is in the business of saving special places and the quality of life they support, and sprawl destroys both. It devours historic landscapes. It makes the strip malls and subdivisions on the edge of Washington look like those on the edge of Albuquerque or Birmingham or any other American city. It drains the life out of older communities, stops their economic pulse and often puts them in intensive care—or sometimes even the morgue.

Sprawl reminds me of Justice Stewart's remark about pornography: It's hard to define,

but you know it when you see it. In simple terms, sprawl is the poorly planned, low-density, auto-oriented development that spreads out from the edges of communities. But it is best defined by the way it affects us in our daily lives.

Winston Churchill said, "We shape our buildings, and then our buildings shape us." The same holds true for communities: The way we shape them has a huge impact on the way we feel, the way we interact with one another, the way we live. By harming our communities, sprawl touches us all—and one way or another, we all pay for it.

We pay in open space and farmland lost. Since 1950, the State of Pennsylvania has lost more than 4 million acres of farmland; that's an area larger than Connecticut and Rhode Island combined. Metropolitan Phoenix now covers an area the size of Delaware. It's estimated that over the next 45 years, sprawl in the Central Valley of California will affect more than 3.6 million acres of America's most productive farmland.

We pay in time lost. A study last year reported that each of us here in Washington spends about 59 hours a year—the equivalent of a week and a half of work—stuck in traffic. The price tag for time and fuel wasted is roughly \$860 annually for every man, woman and child in the Washington area. In Los Angeles, the average speed on the freeway is expected to drop to 11 miles per hour by 2010. A new term "road rage" has been coined to describe drivers' frustration over traffic.

We pay in higher taxes. Over the decades, we've handed over our tax dollars to pay for infrastructure and services—things like police and fire protection, water and sewer lines, schools and streetlights—in our communities. Now we're being asked to pay higher taxes to duplicate those services in sprawling new developments, while the infrastructure we've already paid for lies abandoned or underused in our older city center and suburbs. Even worse, local governments use our tax dollars to offer incentives and write-offs to sprawl developers—in effect, rewarding them for consuming our landscape and weakening our older communities.

Finally, we pay in the steady erosion of our quality of life. Inner cities have become enclaves of poverty. Long, frustrating commutes leave us less time with our families. Tranquil neighborhoods are destroyed by road-widening. Historic landmarks get demolished and carted off to the landfill. Everyplace winds up looking more and more like Noplace. These signs point to an inescapable fact: Sprawl and its byproducts represent the number-one threat to community livability in America today. And in a competitive global marketplace, livability is the factor that will determine which communities thrive and which ones wither. Nobel Prize-winning economist Robert Solow puts it this way: "Livability is not some middle-class luxury. It is an economic imperative."

Sprawl is finally getting the attention it deserves. It was the subject of major initiatives announced by the President and the Vice President in recent back-to-back speeches. Bipartisan caucuses focusing on smart growth and community livability have been formed in both the House and Senate. Governors across the political spectrum have announced programs to control sprawl and encourage smart growth. The Urban Land Institute, the American Institute of Architects, the National Governors Association, and foundations and nonprofit organizations of every stripe hold seminars and workshops on sprawl. Last November, voters from Cape Cod to California overwhelmingly approved some 200 ballot initiatives related to growth management and urban revitalization.

All this attention is welcome. Sprawl is a national problem, and it needs a national de-

bate. But the debate shouldn't focus on finding a national solution, because there isn't one. There are two essential elements in any effective program to combat sprawl: sensible land-use planning and the revitalization of existing communities. These are issues traditionally and best handled at the state and local levels—and that, in the end, is where the fight against sprawl will be won or lost. But—and here's the main point I want to make today—the federal government also has a crucial role to play in the process.

There are obviously many factors such as crime, drugs and bad schools and public services that have helped propel the exodus of people and jobs from our central cities, but that exodus has been greatly facilitated—even accelerated—by the effects of federal policies. Sometimes these effects have been intended and sometimes they have been inadvertent, but in most cases they have been profound. Because the federal government has contributed so heavily to the problem, it has a clear duty to help find solutions.

It can—and should—do so in four ways:

First, it should correct policies that encourage or reward sprawl.

Sprawl-friendly policies and practices exist in almost every federal agency. I'll mention only a few examples.

Nearly 17 million people work directly or indirectly for the federal government. With a workforce that size, decisions about where the government locates its offices can have a huge impact on a community's economic health. A 1996 Executive Order directs federal agencies to give first consideration to locating their facilities in downtown historic districts instead of out on the suburban fringe—but two years after it was issued, compliance is spotty. Right now, for example, in the small, economically-depressed town of Glasgow, Montana, the U.S. Department of Agriculture is putting its county office in a new building that will be constructed in pastureland on the edge of town. A suitable downtown building was available, but USDA rejected it because the parking lot is a block away instead of right next door.

Relocating post offices to suburban sites can also deal a body blow to a small-town Main Street—and put historic buildings at risk as well. Because post offices serve an important role in the social and business life of many towns, the U.S. Postal Service needs to give communities more say in where these essential facilities are to be located.

The federal tax code, in all its complexity, is heavily tilted toward new development and the consumption of open space. It needs to put at least as much emphasis on promoting opportunities for revitalization and stabilization of older communities. It needs to provide incentives—which are currently lacking—for middle-class and moderate-income households to become urban homeowners.

Federal water and sewer grants were originally intended as a means of providing clean water and safe waste-treatment facilities in rural areas. In practice, however, the ready availability of this funding virtually invites development further and further into countryside.

The list goes on and on, but the biggest offender of all is federal transportation policy, which can be summed up in a short phrase: "feed the car, starve the alternative." As Jessica Mathews wrote a while ago in the Washington Post, "Americans are not irrationally car-crazed. We seem wedded to the automobile because policy after . . . policy . . . encourages us to be." Transportation officials generally try to "solve" problems by building more roads—an approach which is often like trying to cure obesity by loosening your belt.

People need transportation choices and communities need balanced transportation

systems. Federal policy hasn't done a good job of offering them—but that may be changing. The Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century, or TEA-21, enacted last year, encourages planning that looks beyond irrelevant political boundaries and allows for greater citizen and local government participation in making transportation investment decisions. That's welcome news, certainly, but TEA-21 is a promissory note that will be redeemed only through hard work at the state and local levels. It offers a great opportunity for the federal Department of Transportation to take a leadership role in urging the states to take full advantage of this landmark legislation.

Within the next few months, the General Accounting Office will release its study on the extent to which federal policies encourage sprawl, and I hope the report will prompt a serious examination of these policies.

Second, the federal government should reward states and communities that promote smart growth and help revitalize existing communities.

Being anti-sprawl is not being anti-growth. The question is not whether our communities should grow, but rather how they will grow. More and more people—private citizens and public officials alike—are realizing that the answer to that question lies in sensible land-use planning.

Three states have recently launched different efforts to manage sprawl. Last May, Tennessee passed a law that requires counties and municipalities to adopt "growth plans" which, among other things, set firm boundaries for new development and public services. Closer to home, Governor Glendening's Smart Growth initiative in Maryland is one of the most innovative—and potentially one of the most significant—in the country. Under Governor Whitman's leadership, residents of New Jersey have approved up to \$98 million in tax revenue annually for conservation and historic preservation; over 10 years this measure will protect a million acres of land—a marvelous gift to future generations.

We should encourage efforts like these in other states. I suggest that we design a federal "smart growth scorecard"—a system that favors sensible, sustainable growth and evaluates the effectiveness with which states and communities meet that test. States that amend their building codes to make them more "rehab-friendly" or that remove their constitutional ban against the use of state gas tax revenues for mass transit projects, for example, are taking positive steps to fight sprawl and restore communities. They ought to be rewarded. The federal scorecard would give states credit for initiatives such as these and would give smart-growth projects an edge in the competition for federal funds.

Third, the federal government should promote regional cooperation as a key to effective control of sprawl.

Metropolitan areas now contain close to 80% of the total U.S. population. Half the people in this country now live in just 39 metropolitan areas. But governmental structures in no way reflect this reality.

Urban decline and sprawl are practically guaranteed wherever there is a balkanized system of local jurisdictions. There's a perfect example right here in Washington, where our metropolitan area is a patchwork quilt comprising two states, the District of Columbia, a dozen counties and a score of municipalities—each with its own budget, each following its own agenda.

When it comes to sprawl, city limits and county lines are often meaningless marks on a map. Limited jurisdiction makes it hard for local government to deal with an issue of this magnitude, and efforts to control sprawl

in a limited area often just shift the problem from one community to another. It's like trying to stop a flood with a picket fence.

States need to encourage local governments in the same region to better coordinate their land-use and transportation plans, and the federal government can help a great deal by simply providing basic information that regions need. Much of this information—dealing with things such as the geographic mismatch between workers and jobs and the extent of outmigration from cities to suburbs—already exists, but it is difficult and expensive for localities to obtain. That's a fairly easy problem to fix, and the federal government ought to do it.

While regionalism by itself does not curb sprawl, it can moderate one of the engines of sprawl: the costly bidding wars between neighboring jurisdictions for sprawl-type development that holds out the hope for new tax revenues. Admittedly, the performance of some regional governments has been lackluster, but in other areas—Portland, Oregon, for examples—regionalism is making a difference in addressing the problems of sprawl and poorly managed growth. Encouraging and assisting similar efforts all over the country should be a cornerstone of federal policy.

Happily, the current Administration is taking an important step in that direction. The "Livability Agenda" recently announced by Vice President Gore proposes a major initiative to reduce barriers to regional governance and to fund local partnerships that pursue smart-growth strategies across jurisdictional lines. This will be the first flexible source of funding provided by the federal government to promote smarter metropolitan growth. It's a very welcome initiative.

Controlling sprawl is only half the battle, which brings me to the fourth thing the federal government should do: provide incentives for reinvestment in existing communities.

Discussions about the plight of the cities often overlook a simple fact: When people leave the city it's not necessarily because they love sprawl or hate urban life, but because leaving is the rational thing to do. More than anything else, urban flight is an indictment of bad schools, crime and poor public services. As if this "push" weren't enough, people are "pulled" out of the city by policies and practices that make homes and infrastructure in the suburbs less expensive and easier to build.

In place of this "push-pull" combination, we need public policy that favors existing communities. Fifty years ago the government began to offer economic inducements to families that wanted to flee to the suburbs; it's time to offer those same kinds of inducements to entice middle-class residents to return to, or stay in, the city.

It all comes down to choosing where to make investments. If the federal government chooses to pour funding into more outer beltways and more suburban infrastructure, sprawl will continue to spread like an epidemic. But if the government makes a commitment to existing communities, it can have an enormous, positive impact on the critical need to keep people in urban neighborhoods and give others a reason to move back to the city.

This is the missing piece of the administration's Livability Agenda, which includes a heavy focus on the preservation of open space. There's no question that we need to speed up our efforts to protect open space and farmland through land trusts, easements, the purchase of development rights and other means. Saving greenspace is a very good thing, but it's not enough by itself. We could buy all the open land in the country and still not solve the problem of sprawl. We

also need to focus energies and resources on reclaiming the streets and neighborhoods where people live—the towns, inner cities and older suburbs that we've neglected so badly for the past half-century. We must develop housing policies and programs that advance the goal of economic integration of our communities and lessen the concentration of poor households in inner-city areas. We must attract middle-income families back to the towns and cities, and we must improve the quality of housing for lower-income people.

One way to do this is by enacting the Historic Homeownership Assistance Act. This legislation, which has broad bipartisan support in both houses of Congress, would extend federal tax credits to homeowners who renovate their historic homes, giving residents of older neighborhoods incentives to stay and invest in their community's future, and providing an incentive for others to move back into the city. By offering a way to put deteriorated property back on the tax rolls while making homeownership more affordable for lower-income residents, this law could greatly benefit communities all over the country. Obviously, this one act won't solve America's urban problems—but it can help, and a step in the right direction is better than standing still.

In fighting sprawl, we're dealing with an issue that undermines many of the national goals and values that we've embraced over the years. The provision of affordable housing, improved mobility, a clean environment, the transition from welfare to work, the livability and economic health of our communities—all of these are undermined by sprawl. In fact, there is scarcely a single national problem that is not exacerbated by sprawl or that would not be alleviated if sprawl were better contained.

We can continue turning much of our nation into a tragic patchwork of ruined cities and spoiled countryside, or we can insist on sensible federal policies that strengthen communities instead of scattering them randomly across the landscape.

We can keep on accepting the kind of communities we get, or we can summon the national will to demand the kind of communities we want and need and deserve.

The choice is ours, and the time to make that choice is now.

FIGHT DIABETES

HON. BERNARD SANDERS

OF VERMONT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 2, 1999

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call the attention of my Colleagues to the following letter I received from a young Vermonter. Philip Burgin-Young is nine years old, and likes to play soccer, as well as study math and science. At the same time, Philip has to regularly check his blood sugar, take three insulin shots a day, and closely watch what he eats, because he is diabetic. Like Philip, I believe that our government must do more for the 16 million Americans suffering from diabetes by investing in a cure to the disease.

I call the attention of my colleagues to this moving letter and submit the letter for the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD for their benefit. FEBRUARY 21, 1999.

Hon. BERNIE SANDERS,
U.S. House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE SANDERS: My name is Philip Burgin-Young, and I am nine years