

# The American Dream, Home Ownership – an Opportunity for Government Control?

✘ By Tom DeWeese

July 12, 2024

Does your family live in a home located in a single-family neighborhood of your choosing? A place where your kids are safe to play in the yard, you can enjoy the sun in your own lounge chair, the grill is ready to be fired up for dinner, and your neighbors wave hello? Best of all, are you counting on the equity value growing with each mortgage payment, preparing for your financial future?

This is your home, your investment, your quality of life!

Well, get ready to lose it all, because a growing movement believes your happiness and success is divisive, racist, and ignores the plight of others who just don't have the same opportunities and privileges as you.

Over the past few years, in several states and communities there has been a drive to eliminate zoning protections for single family neighborhoods such as yours. Those zoning protections were designed to keep your neighborhood in the same shape as you found it. A street of matching home styles, and of equal value, free of apartment buildings and excess crowding of those designed for lower income living space.

As Smart Growth programs began to take control of planning policy in many cities across the nation, single-family neighborhoods became a special target. Of course, Smart Growth is about control of development, not personal choice. Its main focus is to move people out of the rural areas and suburbs

into the inner cities. 15 minute cities! In such a plan there is no room for traditional two-story homes and yards. The new housing plan is for high rise apartments squeezed together in an urban setting where few cars are necessary as you walk or ride your bike to the store; and take public transportation to work. It's all to protect the environment!

But how do you get people to accept such a major change in life? Create a crisis, of course. So today, we have a housing shortage! Proponents of the scheme declare, "We can put 100 families in the space of your house and yard that today only holds four people!"

The main question that must be asked is do we really have a housing shortage? If so, why? Aren't home building companies able to keep up with demand for housing? And why aren't homes affordable to the average American?

The answer is, we don't have a housing shortage, we have a government interference problem. For the past several decades, the government has been working to limit home building. Urban Sprawl, they call it. To protect the environment, we can't have housing developments spreading all over the place. So, many communities have put up Urban Growth Boundaries around the city and allow no growth outside that line. The poster child for this practice is Portland, Oregon. Over twenty years ago the city installed such a boundary and the restrictions have barely changed. But the population has grown by almost 80%. Now Portland has a housing crisis!

Meanwhile millions of illegal aliens are flooding our inner cities, and suddenly we have a national housing shortage. And why are homes no longer affordable? Massive inflation caused by government destruction of the value of the dollar is the real culprit. It's a crisis caused by bad government – not zoning protections for homeowners. In fact, such home ownership used to be called the American Dream. Now it's a crisis.

To make the stakes even higher in our new world of social equity, the mayor of Minneapolis declared that people living in zoning-protected single-family neighborhoods are actually self-segregating themselves from those they don't want to live next to. He summed up the charge saying single-family neighborhoods are racist!

Biden's so-called infrastructure program calls for the end of zoning protections for single-family neighborhoods, to be replaced by the installation of Section 8 public housing projects. And Congress voted big money for such a plan. To implement such a plan, city councils would need to apply for the federal grants supplied through the legislation. Many have done so, but such a process would take time and there is no guarantee that every city would do it. Another approach was needed.

That plan came in June, through the bold efforts of Pennsylvania Senator John Fetterman and Delaware Representative Lisa Blunt Rochester. Together they introduced in both Houses of Congress the "Reducing Regulatory Barriers to Housing Act." Now, instead of waiting for local communities to make the decision to move forward with the assault on community organization, Congress can now make it a law!

In a joint statement, Fetterman and Blunt Rochester explained their motivation for introducing the bill, *"Historically, zoning practices have been used to divide communities and concentrate poverty in under-resourced areas. By transforming our zoning regulations, more people would have access to affordable and diverse types of housing, high-paying jobs, and healthy and safe communities"*.

Do you catch what they are saying? Single family neighborhoods are the root of creating ghettos (under-resourced areas), but, if you move that public housing to upscale neighborhoods, then the inhabitants will have "affordable" housing. Well, yes, that can happen because the values of the homes there will

certainly plummet as property values are destroyed. But how “diverse” can the housing be when government will have to do all of the building in these newly created ghettos? Oh, and don’t forget, the new inhabitants will now get “high-paying jobs” by living in these newly constructed communities. I never knew that salaries on the job depended on the type of housing one lived in! And finally, everyone is going to have “healthy and safe communities” simply because of the location.

Let’s get something straight. Ghettos are created by government controlling the living space because it’s run by bureaucrats who care little about the quality of living there. If the air conditioning stops working, a window is broken, or the land around the building is overgrown with weeds, he still gets paid. Land owned by a private owner is nearly always better taken care of because it affects the value of the property. To believe that simply moving such a nightmare to a nice neighborhood will fix the problem of poverty is just ignorance of economics.

In addition, the Fetterman bill reads, *“It is the policy of the United States to provide for fair housing throughout the country, and it is in the regional and national interest to have a supply of housing that is fair, affordable, adequate, and near opportunity”*. And it goes on to say that any zoning ordinance that restricts housing opportunities based on economic status or income without good reason is “contrary to the regional and national interest.”

Now, under the Fetterman bill, they are not planning to just take your home by eminent domain and just rebuild the neighborhood. No, that would cause controversy and possibly pushback. They can’t have that opposition blocking their high ideas. That would be too messy. Instead, they will begin a steady movement forward. First, they will begin to promote new building in the neighborhood, perhaps to allow tiny homes to be built in the backyards, or apartments over the garage. Next will come the promotion of turning some existing housing into

rental apartments. Slowly the atmosphere in the neighborhood will begin to change.

Over time, the original residents will begin to sell and leave. Their property will be bought by developers who are involved in the reorganization project, such as Blackrock. And the home will be torn down, and apartment buildings placed on the land. One at a time, the original homes will disappear. Finally, you too, will have had enough, and you'll have no choice but to leave. Mission accomplished. Your personal choice, your investment, your ability to live as you chose for your family will disappear.

Do you want to stop this monster? Then the time has come for every homeowner in America to stand up and say NO! Your way of life depends on it.

© 2024 Tom DeWeese – All Rights Reserved

E-Mail Tom DeWeese: [contact@americanpolicy.org](mailto:contact@americanpolicy.org)