

And now, on the Hill too

HUD's a dirty name in suburbs

By MICHAEL MATUSEWSKI
Consider the letters H, U and D.
To Washington watchers they're synonymous with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

To local administrators, county officials and some congressmen, HUD stands for a number gone berserk, deviating wildly from "the letter and spirit of the law."

"The most feared letters in this country, besides I-O-U, are H-U-D," said Birmingham Mayor Robert Kelly, who has been in the forefront of that city's noncompliance with HUD guidelines.

In recent days, HUD administrators have taken action which is sure to fan the flames of resistance among Kelly and others. HUD's new guidelines will require that cities applying for community development block grant funds "their fair share" of low-income housing in the metropolitan Detroit area.

Prior to the new interpretation, HUD had said communities, to qualify for block grant funds, had to provide low-income housing for persons "expected to reside" there.

HUD'S INTERPRETATIONS and guidelines have touched off a move on the Hill to bring the agency back under congressional control.

U.S. Reps. James Blanchard (D-Pleasant Ridge) and Garry Brown (R-Kalamazoo) have attached amendments to a \$31.8 billion housing bill

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—U.S. Rep. James Blanchard

that would gut HUD's new guidelines and would give Congress the power to veto any new regulations. The Blanchard-Brown amendments won the unqualified support of many local and county officials.

The housing bill containing the amendments recently passed the full House, 288-6. Observer & Eccentric area congressmen voting for the bill were Blanchard, William Brodhead (D-Detroit), William Broomfield (R-Birmingham) and David Bonior (D-Mt. Clemens).

Congressmen Carl Pursell (R-Plymouth) and William Ford (D-Taylor) did not vote.

The housing bill now moves to Senate-House conference committee where any differences will be worked out. One of 70 obvious differences between the house and senate versions, Blanchard said, was the absence of any provisions in the Senate bill to restore direct congressional control over HUD's regulations.

"HUD should not do an end run around Congress," Blanchard said. "We want to bring HUD more in line with Congressional intent," he said, calling the

department's policies "arrogant, stupid, unwise and unfair."

THE BATTLE to "rein in" HUD has focused on HUD's policy of using community development funds as a lever to force suburban communities to provide low-income and moderate-income housing for persons who may or may not live in that community.

The Birmingham mayor called it blackmail.

Blanchard said HUD was perverting the intent of Congress.

He said community development funds should be used to help communities rebuild their blighted areas and prevent stable commercial and residential areas from deteriorating—pure and simple.

"HUD should be concentrating its efforts on saving neighborhoods—not remarking or reshuffling them," Blanchard said. HUD's policies "smack of grandiose social planning that hasn't worked," he said.

WHILE HUD has moved into the sphere of social planning, Blanchard

said, the needs of cities and suburban communities have gone unmet.

"A lot of cities have dropped out of the community development program because they didn't have the flexibility," he said. Predicting the trend would continue if the amendments pulling the reins in on HUD were deleted in an upcoming Senate-House conference committee, he said, "HUD has to give local communities and officials credit for knowing how to handle their own problems."

HUD has stopped the flow of community development funds to Livonia, Birmingham, and Dearborn Heights, and its new guidelines jeopardize funds pending in Westland and St. Clair Shores.

"The simple fact is," Blanchard said, "that cities have had a hard enough time satisfying the needs of their own poor people and blighted areas."

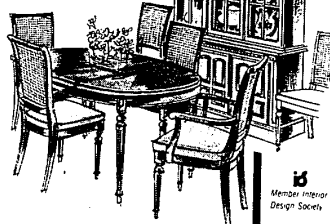
"The money (already in the community development program) isn't nearly enough to make a major dent in helping the poor who already live in the cities," he said, pointing out that most suburban communities already have a share of poor people living within their borders.

"Everyone in the suburbs is not terribly wealthy. We have a hard time dispelling the popular notion that Grosse Pointe Farms and Bloomfield Hills are typical of Detroit's suburbs," he said.

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WHEN: Saturday, August 5, 1978

TIME: 1-5 P.M.

DIRECTIONS: Take US 24 to M-36. Follow M-36 to Whitewood Road. Take Whitewood Rd. to Apache. Follow Apache to Deerfoot. Turn left on Deerfoot and go to Windwheel, follow to end Watch for signs.

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HERE'S HOW TO GET TO OPEN HOUSE #2.

WHERE: Lisalori Lane - Green Oaks Township, Mi.

WHEN: Sunday, August 6, 1978

TIME: 1-5 P.M.

DIRECTIONS: Take 8 Mile Road (approximately 3 miles east of Pontiac Trail) to Lisalori Lane (The Meadows), north about 3/4 mile to building site. Watch for open house signs.

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HERE'S HOW TO GET TO OPEN HOUSE #3.

WHERE: Rippleway - White Lake Township, Mi.

WHEN: Sunday, August 6, 1978

TIME: 1-5 P.M.

DIRECTIONS: From M24 take M59 east 10 miles approximately, past Highland State Recreation Area to Begie Lake Road. Turn south 3/4 miles, turn right onto Cooley Lake Road 2 Miles Turn right on Rippleway at Lake Ona. Go to end and follow signs.

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