

**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES
COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STEERING COMMITTEE**

Resolution on HUD's Affordable Communities Initiative

Issue: HUD's Affordable Communities Initiative, which seeks to remove regulatory barriers to affordable housing.

Adopted Policy: NACo commends the Department on its commitment to reducing regulatory barriers. However, it must be noted that zoning and land use decision making is an inherently local process, subject to a range of influences including market forces, citizen input and political realities. Moreover, there is a concern that some communities without the capacity to undertake technical or personnel changes necessary to implement practices that streamline permitting and zoning processes may lose important federal resources. Regardless, local governments are deeply committed to increasing the supply of affordable housing and agrees that steps can be taken to reduce regulatory barriers.

Background: In 2003, HUD launched "America's Affordable Communities Initiative," a Department-wide effort to help communities to identify and overcome barriers to affordable housing. HUD determined that in many communities, building codes are outdated, design review or approval processes are duplicative or time-consuming, rehabilitation codes are burdensome, and zoning ordinances are restrictive and exclusionary. HUD also targeted fees and taxes deemed unnecessary or excessive, environmental standards labeled as extreme, and excessive or "gold-plated" land development standards as barriers to affordable housing in communities.

While recognizing that many of these local regulations were once well intentioned or useful, HUD determined that these types of regulations limit affordable housing options for families and individuals. In the Affordable Communities Initiative, HUD intends among other things to identify and analyze regulations at all levels of government, assist states and local governments in developing comprehensive programs to remove regulatory barriers, recommend legislative and regulatory changes, and promote the positive aspects of affordable housing.

Fiscal/Urban/Rural Impacts: HUD's Affordable Communities Initiative may help reduce the cost of housing for families and individuals in communities.

Adopted by Community and Economic Development Steering Committee
Unanimous
February 28, 2004

Adopted by NACo Board of Directors
March 1, 2004