

Mr. President, earlier this fall, the distinguished Senator from Minnesota, Mr. Mondale, and I announced our intention to introduce legislation designed to expand and simplify existing housing assistance programs. At that time I placed in the Record a summary of the intent of this proposed legislation so that it could be reviewed and could be discussed during the hearings then being conducted by the Housing Subcommittee of the Committee on Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs. Today, along with Senator Mondale, I am introducing the actual legislation in the form of two measures to be known collectively as the Housing Reform Amendments Act of 1971. By so doing we hope to build on the much-needed consolidation and simplification efforts already undertaken by the Administration in S. 2049. Our overriding interest as we seek to effectively merge the present array of housing assistance programs must continue to center around the alternatives that make these programs more responsive to the needs of families who cannot afford housing within the private market. Moreover, and equally important, we must realistically come to grips with the problems facing developers and sponsors of such housing.

During the past 35 years, we have seen an emerging recognition of nation-wide need for safe and decent housing designed to serve those who have been priced out of the private market. In response, Congress has adopted a number of important and far-reaching programs over these years in an effort to address this need. However, these programs were enacted on an ad hoc basis with the predictable

development of fragmented, complicated and too-often confused national housing assistance "policy."

Many of these impediments can be traced to the formulation of special programs to meet specific needs and to the adoption of a variety of approaches, each with its own eligibility requirements, definitions, restrictions and regulations. The resulting situation of near chaos remains chiefly characterized by a lack of uniformity or requirements and gaps to coverage while confusing and often conflicting guidelines continue to unnecessarily hamper developers and sponsors who are attempting to produce sufficient housing to adequately accommodate the needs to low and moderate income families.

More important, we cannot ignore the impact that this patchwork of programs has had on the families that have attempted to find adequate and safe housing. Who can explain to a family in need of shelter why, under the current law, they may be eligible to rent an apartment in one building built under one federal program but ineligible to rent a nearly identical unit in another building constructed under a different federal program. An even greater exasperation is needed for those needy families who must be told that they will be denied the benefits of all federally-assisted housing because they do not fall within the specific eligibility criteria of any program. We cannot continue to allow varying rent requirements, definitions of income limits and family eligibility to frustrate our efforts to provide effective federal housing assistance for all people of clearly demonstrated need.

