

108TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. CON. RES. 43

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Whereas the United States promotes and encourages the creation and revitalization of sustainable and strong neighborhoods in partnership with States, cities, and local communities;

Whereas the United States promotes and encourages the creation and revitalization of sustainable and strong neighborhoods in partnership with States, cities, and local communities and in conjunction with the independent and collective actions of private citizens and organizations;

Whereas establishing a housing infrastructure strengthens neighborhoods and local economies and nurtures the families who reside in them;

Whereas an integral element of a strong community is a sufficient supply of affordable housing;

Whereas affordable housing may be provided in traditional and nontraditional forms, including apartment buildings, transitional and temporary homes, condominiums, co-operatives, and single family homes;

Whereas for many families a home is not merely shelter, but also provides an opportunity for growth, prosperity, and security;

Whereas homeownership is a cornerstone of the national economy because it spurs the production and sale of

goods and services, generates new jobs, encourages savings and investment, promotes economic and civic responsibility, and enhances the financial security of all people in the United States;

Whereas although the United States is the first nation in the world to make owning a home a reality for a vast majority of its families, $\frac{1}{3}$ of the families in the United States are not homeowners;

Whereas a disproportionate percentage of families in the United States that are not homeowners are low-income families;

Whereas 74.2 percent of Caucasian Americans own their own homes, only 47.1 percent of African Americans, 47.2 percent of Hispanic Americans, and 55.8 percent of Asian Americans and other races are homeowners;

Whereas the community building activities of neighborhood-based nonprofit organizations empower individuals to improve their lives and make communities safer and healthier for families;

Whereas one of the best known nonprofit housing organizations is Habitat for Humanity, which builds simple but adequate housing for less fortunate families and symbolizes the self-help approach to homeownership;

Whereas Habitat for Humanity is organized in all 50 States with 1,655 local affiliates and its own section 501(c)(3) Federal tax-exempt status and locally elected completely voluntary board of directors;

Whereas Habitat for Humanity has built nearly 150,000 houses worldwide and endeavors to complete another 50,000 homes by the year 2005;

Whereas Habitat for Humanity provides opportunities for people from every segment of society to volunteer to help make the American dream a reality for families who otherwise would not own a home; and

Whereas the month of June has been designated as “National Homeownership Month”: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives*
2 *concurring)*, That it is the sense of Congress that—

3 (1) everyone in the United States should have
4 a decent home in which to live;

5 (2) Members of the Senate and the House of
6 Representatives should demonstrate the importance
7 of volunteerism;

8 (3) during the years of the 108th and 109th
9 sessions of Congress, Members of the Senate and the
10 House of Representatives, Habitat for Humanity,
11 and contributing organizations, should sponsor and
12 construct 2 homes in the Washington, D.C., metro
13 area each as part of the “Congress Building Amer-
14 ica” program;

15 (4) each Congress Building America house
16 should be constructed primarily by Members of the
17 Senate and the House of Representatives, their fam-
18 ilies and staffs, and the staffs of sponsoring organi-
19 zations working with local volunteers involving and

1 symbolizing the partnership of the public, private,
2 and nonprofit sectors of society;

3 (5) each Congress Building America house
4 should be constructed with the participation of the
5 family that will own the home;

6 (6) in the future, Members of the Senate and
7 the House of Representatives, their families, and
8 their staff should participate in similar house build-
9 ing activities in their own States as part of National
10 Homeownership Month; and

11 (7) these occasions should be used to emphasize
12 and focus on the importance of providing decent
13 homes for all of the people in the United States.

Passed the Senate May 23, 2003.

Attest:

Secretary.

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Expressing the sense of Congress that Congress should participate in and support activities to provide decent homes for the people of the United States.