

Freedom Matters

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We are a free people in a republic, under a constitution which limits the powers of government to those necessary to secure the unalienable rights of each person to their life, liberty and property. Yet, when a legislature is in session, no one's life, liberty or property is safe. It's the curse of a democracy. That's why we have a republic instead. *Freedom Matters* dedicates itself to the fight to restore our republic. Most of the press and courts fail to do so. They've forgotten that freedom matters.

Federal Control of Local Land Use? The Bankrupting of America

by Bob Bowman

The U. S. Congress is threatening new mischief for land owners, in the form of S. 975 in the Senate and H. R. 1433 in the House, the so-called "Community Character Act." These companion bills would establish a federal grant program under the supervision of the Secretary of Commerce. It would provide up to 90% funding to States, to guide them in enacting legislation for land use planning within the State. In other words, it would create top-down planning. It is a big step toward turning the U. S. into a communist state. It includes ECONOMIC planning. On top of that, one of the criteria specified in the bill that must be met by local planning is "social equity." Economic planning for social equity bankrupted the Soviet Union.

The poison in this Act lies in the following stipulation. "Grant funds received by a State ... shall be used to obtain technical assistance in--

- (1) drafting land use planning legislation;
- (2) research and development for land use planning programs and requirements relating to the development of State guide plans;
- (3) conducting workshops, educating and consulting policy makers, and involving citizens in the planning process; and
- (4) integrating State and regional concerns and land use plans with Federal land use plans."

The poison further includes this criterion: "Standards. -- Land use plans reflect an approach that is consistent with established professional planning standards."

What does this mean, "established professional planning standards"? According to the American Land Rights Association (ALRA), it means that local plans would have to be consistent with a huge manual titled "Smart Growth Legislative Handbook," prepared via a \$2 million grant provided by the Clinton administration, and done out of sight of the public eye by the American Planning Association.

ALRA points out that the "Community Character Act" not only would give jobs to professional planners, it also would give them central control over planning. Local elected boards would have to enact plans drawn up by these "professional planners." **Good-bye local control.**

Senators who support this bill showed their true colors by voting in **SECRET** on it. The Senate Environment and Public Works (EPW) Committee had scheduled a vote on it on about April 11, but because of so much opposition, pulled it from consideration. They rescheduled it for April 25. Then, at the last minute, the public meeting was moved to a room that was closed to the public, and those waiting to get in were denied access. Yet, the committee spokesman insisted, it was still a public meeting!!! That's the Democrat controlled Senate. Double-cross and double-talk.

EPW Committee members who opposed the bill forced a roll call vote. The vote: 12 for, 7 against.

Voting in favor: Senators **Jim Jeffords** (Vermont, chair), Harry Reid (Nevada), Max Baucus (Montana), Bob Graham (Florida), **Joe Lieberman** (Connecticut), Barbara Boxer (California), Ron Wyden (Oregon), Tom Carper (Delaware), **Hillary Clinton** (New York), Jon Corzine (New Jersey), Lincoln Chaffee (Rhode Island) and Arlen Specter (Pennsylvania).

Voting against: Senators Jim Inhofe (Oklahoma), Bob Smith (New Hampshire), John Warner (Virginia), Kit Bond (Missouri), George Voinovich (Ohio), Mike Crapo (Idaho) and Pete Domenici (New Mexico).

Senator Jim Inhofe filed a statement in opposition. He questioned the constitutionality of the federal government getting into zoning and land use. The 10th amendment says that powers not expressly granted to the federal government are reserved to the states.

Excessive tax dollars at the federal level drives this centralization of all power. It is the cancer killing our constitutional form of government. Those who condone it in the name of "social equity" or of "saving the environment" will wake up one day **socially equal** all right. They will be bankrupt, hungry and disenfranchised, like the Russians. They will be too late smart. They'll finally learn what "smart growth" is really all about.

ACTION

Write or call your Representative or Senator in Congress and tell them you oppose the Community Character Act (S. 975 and H. R. 1433). The leftists are lobbying for it, and unless you speak up against it, you will lose.

Readers' Bulletin Board. e-mail us your comments. Include your name, for publication by *Freedom Matters*

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