

103^D CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

H. R. 4580

To establish the Geno Baroni Commission on Neighborhoods and provide for a White House Conference on Neighborhoods, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 14, 1994

Ms. KAPTUR introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Banking, Finance and Urban Affairs

A BILL

To establish the Geno Baroni Commission on Neighborhoods and provide for a White House Conference on Neighborhoods, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Geno Baroni Com-
5 memorative Neighborhood Policy Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND PURPOSE.**

7 (a) CONGRESSIONAL FINDINGS.—The Congress finds
8 that—

9 (1) 1994 is the 10th anniversary of the death
10 of Monsignor Geno Baroni, former Assistant Sec-

1 retary of the Department of Housing and Urban De-
2 velopment;

3 (2) Monsignor Baroni was instrumental in
4 drawing attention to the plight of neighborhoods in
5 the United States;

6 (3) Monsignor Baroni was a champion of civil
7 rights who joined the late Dr. Martin Luther King,
8 Jr., in civil rights marches, a passionate crusader
9 against poverty, and a visionary leader for cultural
10 pluralism and ethnic and racial harmony in the
11 United States;

12 (4) Monsignor Baroni was a minister of the
13 people, interested in the social needs of urban com-
14 munities, who, as a street priest, helped heal the
15 community in Washington D.C., after the urban
16 riots in the late 1960's;

17 (5) Monsignor Baroni expressed great caution
18 regarding the approaches used by Federal programs,
19 demanding that they should work with people, not
20 for them or to them;

21 (6) Monsignor Baroni transcended traditional
22 religious and political boundaries and dared to envi-
23 sion and attempt to create a world unified in its ef-
24 forts to battle against poverty, crime, social injus-
25 tice, and ethnic and racial division;

1 (7) Monsignor Baroni's contribution to, and in-
2 fluence in, the United States are singular and im-
3 measurable, and include—

4 (A) inspiring a new generation to tackle
5 some of the Nation's most profound and intrac-
6 table challenges of poverty, illiteracy, and fear
7 by revitalizing the economic and cultural viabil-
8 ity of their communities; and

9 (B) building coalitions among ethnically di-
10 verse groups and working to eliminate dishar-
11 mony between races;

12 (8) Monsignor Baroni became the first Assist-
13 ant Secretary at the Department of Housing and
14 Urban Development to champion the cause of neigh-
15 borhood empowerment and revitalization through
16 local self-help organizations;

17 (9) as a result of the pioneering efforts of Mon-
18 signor Baroni and the passage of landmark Federal
19 legislation, over 2,500 self-help organizations
20 throughout the United States have undertaken hous-
21 ing and neighborhood development;

22 (10) such organizations that have become an in-
23 creasingly prominent force in rebuilding and revital-
24 izing urban communities in the United States;

1 (11) in the Supplemental Housing Authoriza-
2 tion Act of 1977, the Congress found that—

3 (A) existing city neighborhoods are a na-
4 tional resource to be conserved and revitalized
5 wherever possible, and that public policy should
6 promote that objective; and

7 (B) the tendency of public policy incentives
8 to ignore the need to preserve the built environ-
9 ment could no longer be defended, either eco-
10 nomically or socially, and must be replaced with
11 explicit policy incentives encouraging the con-
12 servation of existing neighborhoods;

13 (12) achieving the objectives of the Supple-
14 mental Housing Authorization Act of 1977 required
15 a comprehensive review of existing laws, policies, and
16 programs which affected neighborhoods, to assess
17 their impact on neighborhoods, and to recommend
18 modifications where necessary;

19 (13) such Act established the National Commis-
20 sion on Neighborhoods to undertake a comprehen-
21 sive study and investigation of the factors contribut-
22 ing to the decline of city neighborhoods and of the
23 factors necessary to sustain neighborhood economic
24 and cultural survival and revitalization; and

1 (14) the Commission recommended modifica-
2 tions in Federal, State, and local laws and rec-
3 ommended the policies and programs necessary to
4 facilitate neighborhood preservation and revitaliza-
5 tion.

6 (b) PURPOSE.—It is the purpose of this Act to com-
7 memorate the work of Monsignor Geno Baroni by—

8 (1) establishing the Geno Baroni Commission
9 on Neighborhoods to assess the progress of the Na-
10 tion in meeting the recommendations of the National
11 Commission on Neighborhoods and to assess and
12 analyze the current challenges, policies, and pro-
13 grams affecting groups involved in neighborhood re-
14 vitalization and conservation; and

15 (2) providing for a White House Conference on
16 Neighborhoods to facilitate the transfer of knowl-
17 edge of neighborhood self-help organizations and de-
18 velop recommendations for neighborhood preserva-
19 tion and revitalization.

20 **SEC. 3. GENO BARONI COMMISSION ON NEIGHBORHOODS.**

21 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is hereby established a
22 commission to be known as the Geno Baroni Commission
23 on Neighborhoods.

24 (b) MEMBERSHIP.—The Commission shall be com-
25 posed of 16 members, to be appointed as follows:

1 (1) 2 members of the Senate appointed by the
2 President of the Senate, who may not be of the same
3 political party in an ex officio capacity.

4 (2) 2 members of the House of Representatives
5 appointed by the Speaker of the House of Rep-
6 resentatives, who may not be of the same political
7 party in an ex officio capacity.

8 (3) The Secretary of Housing and Urban Devel-
9 opment in an ex officio capacity.

10 (4) 11 public members appointed by the Presi-
11 dent of the United States from among persons spe-
12 cially qualified by experience and training to perform
13 the duties of the Commission, 5 of whom shall be
14 elected officers of recognized neighborhood organiza-
15 tions engaged in housing and revitalization pro-
16 grams, and 5 of whom shall be elected or appointed
17 officials of local governments or private sector bank-
18 ing or finance representatives, involved in housing
19 rehabilitation and preservation programs. The re-
20 maining member shall be an individual with out-
21 standing demonstrated experience in neighborhood
22 revitalization activities.

23 (c) CHAIRPERSON.—The Chairperson of the Commis-
24 sion shall be appointed by the President from among the
25 public members appointed under subsection (b)(4).

1 (d) DIRECTOR.—The Commission shall have a Direc-
2 tor, appointed by the Commission, who shall be com-
3 pensated at a rate fixed by the Commission, but which
4 shall not exceed the rate of basic pay payable for level
5 V of the Executive Schedule under title 5, United States
6 Code.

7 (e) DUTIES.—

8 (1) ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS.—The Commis-
9 sion shall undertake a comprehensive study to assess
10 progress made in the United States in carrying out
11 the recommendations made by the National Commis-
12 sion on Neighborhoods (established under title II of
13 the Supplemental Housing Authorization Act of
14 1977), including the recommendations of the Na-
15 tional Commission regarding—

16 (A) geographic discrimination (commonly
17 referred to as “redlining”);

18 (B) targeting assistance to neighborhoods;

19 (C) displacement;

20 (D) human services;

21 (E) community self-help;

22 (F) community full employment;

23 (G) property tax reform;

24 (H) citizen participation; and

25 (I) neighborhood empowerment.

1 (2) ASSESSMENT OF NEW PROBLEMS.—The
2 Commission shall identify and assess any factors
3 arising since the termination of the National Com-
4 mission on Neighborhoods that prevent or interfere
5 with efforts for neighborhood revitalization, includ-
6 ing escalation of the influence of crime, illegal drug
7 use, and racial violence in neighborhoods.

8 (3) ASSESSMENT OF NEW POLICIES.—The
9 Commission shall assess the impact, influence, roles,
10 and needs of Federal, State, local, and other poli-
11 cies, entities, programs, and efforts in revitalizing
12 neighborhoods, implemented or originated since the
13 termination of the National Commission on Neigh-
14 borhoods, including—

15 (A) neighborhood development organiza-
16 tions;

17 (B) financial institutions, including com-
18 munity development financial institutions;

19 (C) programs under the National and
20 Community Service Trust Act of 1993;

21 (D) community development groups and
22 community development corporations; and

23 (E) empowerment zones and enterprise
24 communities established under subchapter U of
25 chapter 1 of the Internal Revenue Code of

1 1986, and enterprise zones established under
2 State and local laws.

3 (4) ASSISTANCE.—The Commission shall assist
4 the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development in
5 carrying out the responsibilities under section 4.

6 (5) UPDATE OF REPORT.—Not later than the
7 convening of the Conference under section 4, the
8 Commission shall update the report of the National
9 Commission on Neighborhoods entitled “People
10 Building Neighborhoods”, dated March 19, 1979, in-
11 cluding the information contained in volumes I, II,
12 and III of such report, by documenting the progress
13 and accomplishments of the organizations identified
14 and analyzed in the report and other existing organi-
15 zations involved in neighborhood revitalization. In
16 updating the report the Commission shall identify
17 strategies and activities carried out by such organi-
18 zations that have been particularly successful in
19 achieving neighborhood revitalization. The Commis-
20 sion shall make the updated report under this sec-
21 tion available at the Conference.

22 (6) REPORT ON CONFERENCE.—The Commis-
23 sion shall prepare a report on the Conference in ac-
24 cordance with section 4(f).

1 (f) REPORT.—During the White House Conference
2 on Neighborhoods held pursuant to section 4, the Commis-
3 sion shall submit to the Congress and the President a com-
4 prehensive report on its studies and activities under sub-
5 section (e), which shall include its findings, conclusions,
6 and recommendations and such proposals for legislation
7 and administrative action as may be necessary to carry
8 out such recommendations.

9 (g) COMPENSATION OF MEMBERS.—

10 (1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in para-
11 graph (2), members of the Commission shall each be
12 entitled to receive \$100 for each day (including trav-
13 el time) during which they are engaged in the actual
14 performance of duties vested in the Commission.

15 (2) PROHIBITION.—Members of the Commis-
16 sion who are Members of Congress or full-time offi-
17 cers or employees of the United States may not re-
18 ceive additional pay, allowances, or benefits by rea-
19 son of their service on the Commission, but may re-
20 ceive expenses under paragraph (3).

21 (3) TRAVEL EXPENSES.—Each member of the
22 Commission shall receive travel expenses, including
23 per diem in lieu of subsistence, in accordance with
24 sections 5702 and 5703 of title 5, United States
25 Code.

1 (h) ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS.—

2 (1) PERSONNEL.—The Commission shall have
3 the power to appoint and fix the compensation of
4 such personnel as it deems advisable.

5 (2) INAPPLICABILITY OF CERTAIN CIVIL SERV-
6 ICE LAWS.—The Director and staff of the Commis-
7 sion may be appointed without regard to the provi-
8 sions of title 5, United States Code, governing ap-
9 pointments in the competitive service, and may be
10 paid without regard to the provisions of chapter 51
11 and subchapter III of chapter 53 of such title, relat-
12 ing to classification and General Schedule pay rates.
13 The rate of pay for the staff may not exceed the an-
14 nual rate of basic pay payable for level IV of the Ex-
15 ecutive Schedule.

16 (3) EXPERTS AND CONSULTANTS.—The Com-
17 mission may procure, in accordance with the provi-
18 sions of section 3109 of title 5, United States Code,
19 the temporary or intermittent services of experts or
20 consultants. Persons so employed shall receive com-
21 pensation at a rate to be fixed by the Commission
22 but not in excess of \$100 per day, including travel-
23 time.

24 (4) INFORMATION FROM AGENCIES AND
25 STATES.—The Commission may secure directly from

1 any department or agency of the United States in-
2 formation necessary to enable the Commission to
3 carry out its duties under this section. Upon request
4 of the Chairperson of the Commission, the head of
5 that department or agency shall furnish that infor-
6 mation to the Commission. The Chairperson may re-
7 quest any department, agency, or other office of any
8 State to furnish, on a reimbursable basis or other-
9 wise, any information necessary to enable the Com-
10 mission to carry out its duties under this section.

11 (5) HEARINGS AND SESSIONS.—The Commis-
12 sion may, for the purpose of carrying out its duties
13 under this section, hold hearings, sit and act at
14 times and places, take testimony, and receive evi-
15 dence as the Commission considers appropriate. The
16 Commission may administer oaths or affirmations to
17 witnesses appearing before it.

18 (i) EXPIRATION OF THE COMMISSION.—The Com-
19 mission shall cease to exist 30 days after the adjournment
20 of the Conference under section 4.

21 **SEC. 4. WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE ON NEIGHBORHOODS.**

22 (a) AUTHORITY TO CALL CONFERENCE.—Not later
23 than November 30, 1996, the President shall convene a
24 White House Conference on Neighborhoods to—

1 (1) facilitate the transfer of knowledge and
2 sharing of experiences among the broad range of
3 neighborhood self-help organizations throughout the
4 United States;

5 (2) acknowledge the accomplishments of such
6 organizations;

7 (3) develop recommendations for additional re-
8 search and public policy recommendations and ac-
9 tions in the field of neighborhood preservation and
10 revitalization; and

11 (4) disseminate the report of, and information
12 obtained by, the Commission and exhibit materials
13 and works of the Commission.

14 To the extent practicable, the conference may be held in
15 conjunction with the Festival of American Folk Life, spon-
16 sored by the Smithsonian Institution.

17 (b) PLANNING AND DIRECTION.—The Conference
18 shall be planned and conducted under the direction of the
19 Secretary in cooperation with the Commission under sec-
20 tion 3, and the heads of such other Federal departments
21 and agencies as are appropriate. Such assistance may in-
22 clude the assignment of personnel.

23 (c) PURPOSE OF CONFERENCE.—The purpose of the
24 Conference shall be—

1 (1) to increase the public awareness of the
2 value and needs of neighborhoods and neighborhood
3 self-help development organizations in the United
4 States;

5 (2) to identify the problems facing neighbor-
6 hoods in the United States and to examine the poli-
7 cies and issues affecting the stability and sustain-
8 ability of neighborhoods;

9 (3) to examine the impact and effectiveness of
10 efforts by the Federal Government and State and
11 local governments, and any private efforts, to initi-
12 ate new neighborhood communities and preserve ex-
13 isting neighborhood communities;

14 (4) to develop such specific and comprehensive
15 recommendations for executive, legislative, and pri-
16 vate action as may be appropriate for maintaining
17 and improving the well-being and infrastructure of
18 neighborhoods; and

19 (5) to develop recommendations for the coordi-
20 nation of Federal policy with State and local policy
21 and needs and to identify the appropriate authority
22 and entities to implement such recommendations.

23 (d) CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS AND DELE-
24 GATES.—

1 (1) PARTICIPANTS.—To carry out the purposes
2 of this section, the Conference shall bring together—

3 (A) professional and lay people who are
4 working in the field of neighborhood revitaliza-
5 tion and preservation;

6 (B) representatives of the Federal Govern-
7 ment and State and local governments;

8 (C) representatives of banking, lending,
9 and other financial institutions; and

10 (D) representatives of the general public.

11 (2) SELECTION OF DELEGATES.—The delegates
12 shall be selected without regard to political affili-
13 ation or past partisan activity and shall be rep-
14 resentative of the diversity of thought in the field of
15 neighborhood revitalization and preservation. Dele-
16 gates shall include individuals who are professionals,
17 individuals who are not professionals, minority indi-
18 viduals, and individuals from low-income families.

19 (e) CONFERENCE ADMINISTRATION.—

20 (1) ADMINISTRATION.—In administering this
21 section, the Secretary shall—

22 (A) request the cooperation and assistance
23 of the heads of such other Federal departments
24 and agencies as may be appropriate in the car-
25 rying out of this section;

1 (B) furnish all reasonable assistance, in-
2 cluding financial assistance, to State agencies,
3 area agencies, and other appropriate organiza-
4 tions to enable them to organize and conduct
5 conferences in conjunction with the Conference;

6 (C) make available for public comment a
7 proposed agenda for the conference that reflects
8 to the greatest extent possible the major issues
9 facing neighborhoods;

10 (D) prepare and make available back-
11 ground materials for the use of delegates to the
12 Conference that the Secretary considers nec-
13 essary; and

14 (E) engage such additional personnel as
15 may be necessary to carry out the provisions of
16 this section without regard to provisions of title
17 5, United States Code, governing appointments
18 in the competitive service, and without regard
19 to chapter 51 and subchapter III of chapter 53
20 of such title relating to classification and Gen-
21 eral Schedule pay rates.

22 (2) DUTIES.—The Secretary shall, in carrying
23 out the responsibilities and functions of the Sec-
24 retary under this section, and as part of the White
25 House Conference on Neighborhoods, ensure that—

1 (A) the conferences under paragraph
2 (1)(B) shall be conducted in a manner that en-
3 sures broad participation of Federal, State, and
4 local agencies and private organizations, profes-
5 sionals, and others involved in neighborhood re-
6 vitalization and preservation;

7 (B) the agenda prepared under paragraph
8 (1)(C) for the Conference is published in the
9 Federal Register; and

10 (C) the personnel engaged under para-
11 graph (1)(E) shall be fairly balanced in terms
12 of points of views represented and shall be ap-
13 pointed without regard to political affiliation or
14 previous partisan activities.

15 (f) REPORT.—The Commission under section 3 shall
16 prepare a report describing the activities of the Conference
17 and shall submit the report to the President and the chief
18 executive officers of the States not later than 90 days after
19 the date on which the Conference is adjourned.

20 **SEC. 5. DEFINITIONS.**

21 For purposes of this Act—

22 (1) the term “Commission” means the Geno
23 Baroni Commission on Neighborhoods established
24 under section 3;

1 (2) the term “Conference” means the White
2 House Conference on Neighborhoods pursuant to
3 section 4;

4 (3) the term “Secretary” means the Secretary
5 of Housing and Urban Development; and

6 (4) the term “State” means the States of the
7 United States, the District of Columbia, the Com-
8 monwealth of Puerto Rico, the Commonwealth of the
9 Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, the Virgin Is-
10 lands, American Samoa, and any other territory or
11 possession of the United States.

12 **SEC. 6. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

13 (a) IN GENERAL.—There are authorized to be appro-
14 priated—

15 (1) \$4,000,000 to carry out section 3, of which
16 \$2,000,000 shall be available for activities under
17 section 3(e); and

18 (2) \$2,000,000 to carry out section 4.

19 (b) AVAILABILITY.—Any amounts appropriated pur-
20 suant to this section shall remain available until the expi-
21 ration of the 1-year period beginning on the date of the
22 adjournment of the Conference.

23 (c) CONTRACTS.—The Secretary and the Commission
24 may enter into contracts to carry out their responsibilities

- 1 under this Act, but only to the extent, or in such amounts
- 2 as are, provided in advance in appropriations Acts.

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