

The bill also streamlines procedures for public housing authorities to designate public housing facilities as "elderly only," "disabled only," or "elderly and disabled families only." S. 1494 provides the authority to evict from these designated facilities those whose pattern of drug or alcohol abuse would jeopardize the safety and security of the elderly and disabled residents. These provisions reflect concerns raised by advocates for the elderly about the mixing of elderly and disabled populations, but they provide a balanced policy that will help provide access to affordable housing for both of these special needs populations. Again, these provisions are similar to those contained in the Public Housing Reform and Empowerment Act.

S. 1494 also extends the Home Equity Conversion Mortgage Demonstration for the elderly through September 30, 2000, instead of the 1-year extension originally passed by the Senate.

The bill provides authority for the HUD Secretary to operate the low-income housing preservation program passed by Congress in the vetoed fiscal year 1996 VA-HUD appropriation bill. These provisions are necessary to prevent large-scale mortgage prepayments of FHA-insured mortgages and thus preserve the existing supply of affordable low-income housing.

In addition, S. 1494 creates a self-help housing program under which HUD will provide grants to capable nonprofit organizations, like Habitat for Humanity. Grand funds must be used for the payment of land acquisition and infrastructure costs. These funds will supplement donations and contributions of products, volunteer labor and sweat equity, on which groups like Habitat now depend.

Finally, S. 1494 authorizes only through September 30, 1996, the section 515 rural rental housing program administered by USDA's Rural Housing Service [RHS]. Before the program is authorized beyond the current fiscal year, oversight hearings should be held and reforms implemented to guard against waste, abuse, and misuse of funds. The RHS has taken significant steps to correct problems in the section 515 program which have been identified by the USDA IG and the GAO. However, legislative action is required to assure that program funds are allocated properly and that the program is not abused by developers, owners, or tenants. The Banking Subcommittee on Housing Opportunity and Community Development, which I chair, will hold hearings on the section 515 program early this spring.

• Mr. SARBANES. Mr. President, I rise in support of S. 1494, the Housing Opportunity Program Extension Act. This bill addresses some important and time-sensitive matters in the housing area. S. 1494 extends program authorities that have expired and makes some other needed changes in authorizing statutes. Finally, it provides HUD with the authority to support several na-

tional nonprofit organizations that are making a huge difference in America's communities. I thank the other members of the Senate for their support of this legislation.

S. 1494 extends several housing authorizations that expired October 1, 1995. Among these are the Community Development Block Grant direct homeownership assistance provisions, the Federal Housing Administration [FHA] multifamily insurance risk-sharing programs, and the Home Equity Conversion Mortgage program. Each of these programs is a valuable tool in our efforts to make sure that Americans remain the best-housed people in the world.

The program extensions on this bill also include the section 515 rural rental housing program and the set-asides within the program for nonprofit developers and for funding to underserved areas. This authorization is necessary because the Rural Housing Service at the Department of Agriculture has been unable to utilize its \$150 million appropriation until an authorization passed. Section 515 provides valuable, low-interest credit to support affordable rental housing in rural areas.

The bill also includes authority for the HUD Secretary to spend up to \$60 million supporting local nonprofit housing and community development activities. I would like to express my enthusiastic support for these provisions. The bill authorizes \$25 million for Habitat for Humanity, \$15 million for other similar self-help housing programs, \$10 million for the National Community Development Initiative, and \$10 million for National Cities in Schools. Habitat for Humanity affiliates have been operating in my State for years and creating homeowners among low-income families. The National Community Development Initiative combines Federal funds with funds from foundations to support capacity building for community-based nonprofits. Two terrific national nonprofit intermediaries—the Enterprise Foundation which is based in Columbia, MD, and the Local Initiatives Support Corporation—are key participants in the NCDI program and are factors in the NCDI program's success. The community-based nonprofit sector is an important and growing part of our delivery system of assistance to distressed communities. I am pleased with the recognition that this bill provides to these efforts.

Finally, Mr. President, I would like to highlight the language in the bill that permits HUD to renew expiring Section 8 moderate rehabilitation contracts. This provision overturns language passed on the continuing resolution that prohibited HUD from renewing moderate rehabilitation contracts. Clearly, HUD should not renew contracts on housing that is not decent, safe, and sanitary. Likewise, we are working with HUD to identify ways to reduce the cost of Section 8 contracts where rent levels are excessive. How-

ever, HUD needs to take a closer look at all of the developments assisted with project-based rental assistance and make decisions about their futures on a case-by-case basis. Before converting project-based assistance to vouchers, HUD should consider the future viability of the development, the ability of the project to support its existing financing, the availability of affordable housing for voucher holders, and the desirability of retaining long-term, affordable housing in that location.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. GRASSLEY addressed the Chair. The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa is recognized.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for 5 minutes as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

A BATTLE OVER THE PROMOTION OF NAVY COMMANDER ROBERT STUMP

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I want to take a moment to speak about a battle that is raging over the promotion of Navy Comdr. Robert Stump. The battle is raging within the Senate Armed Services Committee, and it is being discussed, as well, in the press.

I have had my differences with this committee in the past, but I want to set the record straight. In this particular case, I think the committee is getting a bum rap. I think the Senate Armed Services Committee is doing the right thing.

Commander Stump's promotion to the rank of captain has been denied by the Senate Armed Services Committee. It was denied because of his suspected involvement in the inappropriate behavior at the Tailhook convention.

I support the committee's decision to deny the promotion, and I support it 100 percent.

Unfortunately, Commander Stump believes that promotion is an inalienable right. Sadly, he believes that the Senate should not sit in judgment of his character, or even make judgments about his character. So he has hired a lawyer and has been conducting a very ugly lobbying campaign.

The committee is getting hammered with bad publicity. His supporters argue that Commander Stump has been cleared of criminal wrongdoing. They argue that he is an innocent man, and they argue that he has been treated unfairly and that the flagging procedure should be abolished.

Being cleared of criminal charges does not tell me that Commander Stump is ready for promotion. Mr. President, this is a negative standard of judgment. A negative standard of judgment will not help to nurture the kind of topnotch leadership that the Navy so badly needs.

To decide whether he is ready for promotion to captain, we need unambiguous answers to at least 5 questions: