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Speech by State Senator John Joseph Moakley in support of the "Anti-Snob Zoning" bill, 8/1/1969

John Joseph Moakley

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Recommended Citation
THIS BILL ATTEMPTS TO BREAK THE "URBAN RING", THAT INVIDIOUS ECONOMIC RING, THAT HAS BEEN ERECTED TO THwart THE SPREAD OF OUR LOWER INCOME CITIZENS TO THE COMFORT OF THE SUBURBS.

THE BILL PLACES SUBURBAN ACTION WHERE ITS MOUTH HAS BEEN FOR YEARS. THE SUBURBS MUST BEAR SOME RESPONSIBILITY FOR THOSE WHO LIVE IN THE INNER CORE. OUR FORTUNATE CITIZENS LIVING OUTSIDE THE CITY HAVE ALMOST REAWAKENED COLONIALISM. THEY WORK AND DERIVE REVENUE FROM OUR CITIES, BUT LEAVE IT AT NIGHT TO ENTER THEIR HEAVENS.

GENTLEMEN, REGIONAL THINKING IS UPON US, BECAUSE WE HAVE ALLOWED OUR PROBLEMS TO COMPOUND; THROUGH LETHARGY. IT MAY WELL TAKE SUCH REGIONAL AND STATE PLANNING TO OVERCOME OUR DIRE HOUSING PROBLEM. IN FACT, IT WILL, AND BILL 5581 RESPONDS TO THIS DEPLORABLE SITUATION.

RESTRUCTURE ZONING HAS BEEN AND CONTINUES TO BE THE PRIME IMPEDIMENT TO THE BUILDING OF LOW OR MODERATE INCOME HOUSING IN OUR NEIGHBORING AND CONTIGUOUS SUBURBS. THE VARIANCE PROCEDURE IS CUMBERSOME, TIME CONSUMING, FRUSTRATING AND WEIGHED HEAVILY IN THE FAVOR OF THE LOCAL BOARD WHICH RIGHTLY HAS ITS OWN COMMUNITY AT HEART.

THIS BILL ESTABLISHES CRITERIA FOR JUDGING WHEN LOW OR MODERATE INCOME HOUSING SHOULD BE RELEASED FROM LOCAL ZONING CODES AND WHAT SPECIAL REGULATIONS THIS BUILDING WILL HAVE TO FOLLOW. THIS BILL FURTHER ESTABLISHES CRITERIA FOR A TOWN TO JUDGE WHEN LOW AND MODERATE INCOME HOUSING SHOULD NOT BE RELEASED FROM LOCAL ZONING CODES AND SHOULD NOT BE BUILT IN THE COMMUNITY. THE REASONS FOR EXCLUDING SUCH HOUSING INCLUDE: (1) EXISTING LOW AND MODERATE INCOME HOUSING ALREADY MAKES UP TEN PERCENT OF THE HOUSING OF THE COMMUNITY BASED ON THE LATEST DECENNIAL
CENSUS, (2) SUCH HOUSING WILL TAKE UP SITES COMPRISING MORE THAN ONE-
HALF PERCENT OR MORE OF THE TOTAL LAND ZONED FOR RESIDENTIAL, COMMER-
cIAL, AND INDUSTRIAL PURPOSES, (3) THE APPLICATION TO BUILD WOULD
RESULT IN HOUSING TAKING UP SITES COMPRISING MORE THAN THREE TENTHS OF
ONE PERCENT OF SUCH LAND AREA OR TEN ACRES IN ANY CALENDAR YEAR.

GENTLEMEN, LAND IN METROPOLITAN BOSTON, WORCESTER, FITCHBURG,
SPRINGFIELD, LOWELL AND LAWRENCE IS IN ITSELF PROHIBITIVE IN COST FOR
SUCH ENDEAVORS BY DEVELOPERS. IT DISCOURAGES A SOLUTION TO THIS PRESS-
ING PROBLEM.

THE NUMBER ONE DOMESTIC PROBLEM FACING OUR NATION AS DEFINED BY
MR. MOYNIHAN, HIMSELF, IS HOUSING. GENTLEMEN, BOSTON IS NOT WINNING
ITS BATTLE FOR MORE HOUSING, THE COSTS ARE PROHIBITIVE. FROM 1960 TO
1966 THE NET GAIN IN HOUSING UNITS HAS BEEN ESTIMATED AS ONLY 355 UNITS.
BOSTON CANNOT SOLVE THIS PROBLEM ALONE. THE CITIES NEED YOUR HELP.
YOU HAVE ARTICULATED YOUR DESIRE TO HELP. NOW WE ASK YOU TO HELP BY
THIS TOKEN MEASURE.

IN FACT, YOU MAY BE HELPING YOUR OWN LOW OR MODERATE INCOME PEOPLE
WHO WORK IN YOUR COMMUNITIES BUT ARE UNABLE TO LIVE THERE BECAUSE OF
THE HIGH COST OF HOUSING. THIS MAY INCLUDE YOUR TEACHERS, YOUR FIREMEN,
POLICEMEN AND OTHER PUBLIC SERVANTS WHO FALL IN THIS RANGE.

Income
of Up to $12,000 Annually