



Written by [Alex Newman](#) on April 17, 2017

Bill Would Nullify Obama Plot to “Diversify” Your Neighborhood

Legislation has been introduced in Congress to defund and overturn [a controversial Obama administration decree](#) from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to transform and “diversify” American neighborhoods under the direction of Big Brother. The new bill would also reverse the attempted unconstitutional usurpation of power over local zoning decisions by the federal government and the unelected regional authorities charged with managing the transformation. And the measure would end a “geospatial database” mandated under the scheme to track the racial and income composition of each area, a key element of the scheme to redistribute people based on their melanin content and earnings.



The Obama administration’s race-obsessed decree, known as the “[Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing](#)” (AFFH) rule, became a lightning rod for criticism by conservatives and constitutionalists last year. A coalition of Republican lawmakers, facing outrage among their constituents, tried to defund the unconstitutional scheme while Obama was still in office. However, [establishment Republicans quietly worked behind the scenes to betray conservatives by supporting Obama’s radical power grab and handing even more tax money to Obama’s HUD](#). With those establishment lawmakers still in power, passage of the new bill remains far from assured, even with Trump in the White House, Ben Carson at HUD, and the GOP in control of both houses of Congress. But prospects are better than before, analysts say.

The bill to overturn the AFFH decree is known as the “[Local Zoning Decisions Protection Act of 2017](#).” In the House of Representatives, where it was introduced by Representative Paul Gosar (R-Ariz.), the legislation is known as H.R. 482. In the Senate, the companion bill, S. 103. was introduced by Senator Mike Lee (R-Utah). Both Representative Gosar and Senator Lee led the way last year in the unsuccessful attempt to defund and defang the AFFH scheme. Supporters of the effort, though, hope this year the chances for success will be better considering the new political dynamics — at least if the American people continue to speak out.

The description of the six-page bill reads: “To nullify certain regulations and notices of the Department of Housing and Urban Development, and for other purposes.” In particular, the bill targets Obama’s AFFH scheme, adopted by Obama’s HUD in July of 2015, as well as any substantially similar regulation that may be published in the future. Under the legislation, the AFFH “shall have no force or effect.” The department is also prohibited from using any funds to implement the scheme, or to build the associated federal database containing “geospatial information” on the racial and income composition of American



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communities.

Senator Lee was bold in slamming the scheme last year, saying it turns HUD into a “National Zoning Board.” Indeed, the explicit purpose of AFFH was “to empower federal bureaucrats to dictate where a community’s low-income residents will live,” he said. Lee also outlined how the Obama HUD edict would purport to empower D.C. bureaucrats to run roughshod over local communities and their elected officials. “If any aspect of a community’s housing and demographic patterns fails to meet HUD bureaucrats’ expansive definition of ‘fair housing,’ the local government must submit a plan to reorganize the community’s housing practices according to the preferences and priorities of the bureaucrats,” he explained.

The New American was among the earliest voices to expose the Obama administration’s AFFH scheme. In fact, [this magazine warned as far back as 2013](#) — years before the regulation was formally approved — that Obama was plotting precisely such a scheme as part of his stated goal of “fundamentally transforming” America. And if it goes forward, the AFFH would indeed fundamentally transform America, down to the most minute local decisions. And of course, by redistributing people across America using federal funds, and hijacking control over local zoning decisions, the Obama scheme would also fundamentally transform politics by diluting the conservative vote in communities across the country. [Similar schemes are being pushed at the global level by the United Nations.](#)

Under the expansive regulations, cities and towns that accept federal money from the HUD would be required to submit to vast federal controls over their policy decisions. For instance, if a community receives an HUD grant, the AFFH purports to mandate costly demographic analyses at the local and regional level to determine whether there are enough low-income and minority residents living in each neighborhood, as defined by HUD bureaucrats. The giant database would include records on residents including income, race, color, religion, national origin, and much more.

If the HUD determines that not enough welfare recipients live in your neighborhood, for instance, the bureaucracy would declare your community to be “out of balance” and not in compliance with the AFFH. In response, the massive bureaucracy would use taxpayer funds — or borrowed money, considering the \$20 trillion and counting in national debt — to file lawsuits against the community and impose its will. That might take the form of building more government-subsidized low-income housing in your neighborhood to attract enough welfare recipients to put your community back in balance. In short, it is social engineering by the federal government on a massive scale.

In fact, HUD has been involved in such scheming for years, with targeted communities going up against the might of Uncle Sam. In Westchester County, New York, for example, the Obama administration went to war with the community and its elected officials because they did not have enough low-income, high-density housing developments to satisfy federal bureaucrats. When local officials and residents fought back, the administration sued them, and even went so far as to seek a gag order against the county executive who was leading the fight against Obama’s AFFH.

In an e-mail to members and supporters, the constitutionalist John Birch Society, which publishes this magazine, warned that the Obama scheme was an attack on fundamental American values. “AFFH is dangerous to American property owners and to local government in our communities,” the organization warned last week, calling the scheme “Barack Obama’s most radical assault on American private property rights and locally elected governments.” Among other concerns, the JBS, which has chapters active in all 50 states, warned that the AFFH “obliterates personal property rights and destroys property values in whole neighborhoods.”



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The Obama scheme also destroys cherished American traditions of local governance. “As HUD demands that the ‘imbalance’ be corrected by forcing federally subsidized housing into more affluent neighborhoods, property values plummet. Equity in those homes will be lost,” explained Tom DeWeese, president of the American Policy Center. “In addition, as HUD moves to enforce these badly defined rules, its agents begin to dictate to local officials how their communities will develop. Locally elected officials simply become pawns to carry out HUD rules. Home rule in America will die under AFFH.”

The Left and Big Government forces, he said, are gearing up to claim that the bill to nullify AFFH is somehow “damaging” to the poor. But in reality, the AFFH itself is damaging to the poor and everyone else except government cronies — not to mention freedom, the Constitution, and key individual rights. “So AFFH is a threefold threat,” DeWeese concluded. “It destroys property rights and values. It usurps local government control. And it steals homes and dreams from the poor.” As such, property-rights advocates and constitutionalists are urging all Americans to get involved in the fight.

“There is great optimism by the sponsors of the bills that they will pass and that President Trump will sign them into law,” DeWeese noted. “However, there is growing pressure from civil rights groups, developers, and their lobbyists who fully understand the dangers these bills represent to their big government agenda. It is vital that those of us opposed to AFFH and HUD over reach keep up our own pressure by calling our Representatives and Senators to demand they support HR 482 and S.103.” The only caveat he mentioned was that the bills contain language forcing HUD to talk with “regional councils,” language he said he is hoping to have removed.

Cosponsors of the legislation in the House include Brian Babin (R-Texas), Marsha Blackburn (R-Tenn.), Rod Blum (R-Iowa), Ken Buck (R-Colo.), Michael Burgess (R-Texas), Scott DesJarlais (R-Tenn.), Jeff Duncan (R-S.C.), John Duncan, Jr. (R-Tenn.), Trent Franks (R-Ariz.), Glenn Grothman (R-Wis.), Steve King (R-Iowa), Thomas Massie (R-Ky.), Tom McClintock (R-Calif.), Ted Poe (R-Texas), Dana Rohrabacher (R-Calif.), Pete Sessions (R-Texas), Jason Smith (R-Mo.), Daniel Webster (R-Fla.), Ted Yoho (R-Fla.), Dave Brat (R-Va.), David Joyce (R-Ohio), Andy Biggs (R-Ariz.), Todd Rokita (R-Ind.), and Lamar Smith (R-Texas). In the Senate, Senator Marco Rubio (R-Fla.) is also a cosponsor.

Beyond simply nullifying the Obama administration’s illegal rule, Congress should also work to abolish the entire agency. There is no authority contained in the Constitution for federal involvement in either housing or urban development. As such, there is no need for, or authority for, a federal department dealing with those issues. If the electorate feels that government must be involved in housing or urban development — a dubious notion, at best — then the proper sphere of government for that is the state or local level, constitutionally speaking.

But progress limiting government to its constitutional confines at federal level may take a long time. So in the meantime, Americans should also continue to work at the local level to prevent federal meddling in their communities, while educating the electorate on constitutional governance. A good place to start is working to end the unconstitutional flow of federal tax dollars — and the strings they come attached with — to state and local governments. The feds were never meant to control local government or zoning decisions. It is time for that to stop.

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