

Group Appeals to Proxmire Over Housing Point System

By COLIN McENROE

Members of a Hartford-based civil rights group have appealed to U.S. Sen. William Proxmire, D-Wis., for help in their fight against a state preference point system used in Glastonbury and Farmington.

Susan Barber, representing Education/Instrucción, (E/I) wrote to Proxmire this week to protest the system. Under the system, applicants for housing for the elderly who have lived in the same town as the housing complex, are given preferable points.

"Preference, based on prior residency, in a predominantly white town gives admission preference to whites, thus perpetuating the existing segregation," said Ms. Barber.

Ms. Barber said E/I chose Proxmire because of his previous sympathy to equal opportunity causes and his position as chairman of the Senate's Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committee.

E/I attached a recent dispatch from former U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Undersecretary John B. Rhinelander who advised HUD Regional Administrator Maurice E. Frye that HUD would not consider the pref-

erence system discriminatory unless it is "intentionally" used to restrict acceptances of minority applicants.

Although officials of the state Department of Community Affairs (DCA) have advised municipalities that the Rhinelander memorandum, "closes the book," on the point system controversy, E/I says it is "appalled at the blatant absurdity of the logic used by many HUD officials on this issue."

U.S. Justice Department officials disclosed last week they are continuing their review of evidence collected by the FBI in a civil rights investigation conducted this fall after a complaint filed by E/I charging the two towns with fraud in their housing practices.

E/I countered Rhinelander's contention that point systems are valid unless they intentionally discriminate with a citation from the 1973 court decision of *Otero v. New York Housing Authority* which barred housing authorities from "using assignment methods which seek to exclude, or have the effect of excluding persons of minority races from residing in predominately white areas."

E/I requested that Proxmire "bring this matter to further action."

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E/I Suggests Kinne Act on Housing 'Bias'

By COLIN McENROE

GLASTONBURY—After a respite of several months, Education/Instrucción (E/I) touched off a renewed attack on Glastonbury's elderly housing program Friday in a letter suggesting that Town Council Chairman Henry A. Kinne to resign from the chairmanship of the Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) Housing Committee.

E/I representatives Patrick Hare and Susan Barbour attacked an opinion by Town Attorney Ralph G. Elliot in support of the town Housing Authority's practice of awarding preference points to applicants for elderly housing who have lived in town previously.

Hare and Ms. Barber claim that the point system has the effect of barring minorities since Glastonbury is more than 99 per cent white.

In applying for federal Community Development Block Grant funds, Kinne and the council committed themselves to "administer all programs and activities relating to housing and community development in a

manner to affirmatively further fair housing."

Hare and Ms. Barbour contend that the point system constitutes a violation of that assurance.

Th letter faulted Kinne for signing "statements of compliance with civil rights laws you have never tried to understand or even read, simply in order to get funds for your already well-healed suburbs."

"Your rhetoric is equal opportunity, but your reality is apartheid," the letter said.

The letter contained a five-point response to Elliot's opinion which asserted that the point system does not constitute a violation of fair housing laws.

Hare and Ms. Barbour asked Kinne to ask Elliot for a new opinion taking into consideration the assurances signed in the block grant application.

They also requested that the Town Council direct the Housing Authority to establish an "affirmative marketing" program which would correct past discriminatory practices.

If Kinne does not agree to

the two requests, the letter asked that he resign as chairman of the committee.

"We do not see how you can stay as the head of a committee to solve regional housing problems . . . when you refuse to take a stand against a discriminatory housing practice in your town," the letter said.

Hare and Barbour faulted Kinne for doing "nothing in the way of providing public, open leadership to make your town back up its word."

"Your hypocrisy should embarrass even Glastonbury," the letter said.

Kinne said the CRCOG Housing Committee has already begun plans for a conference of all municipal housing directors in the capitol region.

"This problem is one of several that we will be talking about," said Kinne.

"In addition," said Kinne, "we are still waiting for guidelines from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) on where we stand with respect to point systems like ours and fair housing."