

Fueling the housing crisis

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IN HIS LETTER (June 21) HUD Secretary Mel Martinez praises the Bush administration for "committing tremendous resources" to resolving housing issues, but neglects to admit the administration's responsibility for the housing crisis. Martinez bemoans "exclusionary zoning, costly building fees, and regulatory barriers," but fails to mention the extent to which population growth, almost entirely the result of immigration, fuels a perpetual need for more housing.

The elimination of what he sees as barriers to housing would benefit builders, but not, in the long run, end the housing shortage.

Even if the housing crisis were cured today and the relentless upward spiral of housing costs ended, we would find ourselves in the same predicament in a short time. And the more successful the president is at persuading Congress to support his immigration policies, the shorter the time would be un-



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til we had to resume building more housing, more roads, ever more schools, hospitals, prisons.

Martinez writes of the administration's respect for a partnership between the federal government and communities in solving housing issues, but he and the president offer no such respect to communities when it comes to the problems of crowding, water shortages, and tax burdens that the communities bear as a result of federal immigration policies in which they have no say.

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Concord