

Government Affairs

AIA Testifies for Safe and Affordable Housing

Institute notes livable communities context to Millennial Housing Commission

Guided by input from members of the Housing Professional Interest Area, the AIA submitted testimony to the congressionally mandated Millennial Housing Commission, which is preparing recommendations on federal housing policy.

The AIA testimony emphasizes the importance of providing safe, decent, and affordable housing for all Americans. It assesses the current federal housing programs, barriers to providing sufficient affordable housing, and state and local programs that could serve as models for federal action. The testimony also notes that as an essential component of livable communities, providing adequate affordable housing requires partnerships among the for-profit, non-profit, and government sectors.

The testimony includes descriptions and images of the 2000 and 2001 AIA/HUD Secretary's Housing and Community Design Awards winners to illustrate the types of projects the government should be encouraging.

Highlights of the testimony include five clear points.

- High-quality design is key to creating mixed-income housing that is accepted in a neighborhood.
- The AIA recognizes that creating livable communities will be the primary challenge of design professionals, housing advocates, and



Vermont Village Plaza, Los Angeles, by Solomon E.T.C. Architecture and Urban Design, was one of the AIA/HUD Secretary's Housing and Community Design Awards presented as a good example of high-quality affordable housing.



Arbolera De Vida in Albuquerque, by Design Workshop and Studio E Architects, is another HUD Secretary's Award winner used to illustrate concepts of good community design.

the real-estate and finance industries in this century.

- Smart-growth policies and sustainable design are cornerstone efforts that should be brought to bear in conversations with the energy and construction industries.
- The federal government should sponsor workshops with large institutions—such as colleges, universities, hospitals, labor unions, and investment funds—to look at their growth potential with and without aggressive development of more affordable housing.
- The AIA believes that the production of well-designed, well-constructed, and affordable housing is not a luxury but a necessity to the continued economic vitality of the country.

AIA members can now view the AIA's testimony to the Millennial Housing Commission in its entirety on the Web via the AIA side of the MyAIA portal, www.aia.org. Once in the portal, search for "Millennial Housing Commission." An abridged version is also available on the AIA public Web site. www.aia.org/gov/federal/legissues/livcomtest0701.asp

If you would like to read more about the Millennial Housing Commission or the testimony of other organizations, visit the commission's Web site. www.mhc.gov/responses.html 