HUD Official To Realtors: "Reinventing HUD Is Our Task"

of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) " a catalyst, not an obstacle," in finding solutions to nation's housing and community development prob-

Terrence Duvernay, a HUD deputy secretary, discussed HUD's new focus at a forum during the National Association of Realtors' Midyear Conference and Trade Exposiattended the April 23-28 conference.

According to Duvernay, HUD is committed to being an "agent of change" that will reorganize its programs so they effectively serve the needs for which they were created "Reinventing HUD is our task," Duvernay said. Department officials plan to "transform uncoordinated programs" and "make (HUD) a problemsolving" deliverer of housing, he noted.

department's efforts to expand the availability of single-family loans proervation of low-income multifamily mortgage insurance limit. housing and increase enforcement of activity, noting that the program cur-

working to make the U.S. Department to get FHA back" as a major mortgage growing shortage of affordable hous- make them poor choices as for-purinsurance, Duvernay said.

Last year, NAR voiced concerns over FHA changes imposed by HUD that made the program less affordable lems, according to department repre- and less usable for entry-level buyers. The changes, which essentially raised repealed in NAR-supported housing legislation enacted late last year.

tion. Nearly 7,000 realtors and guests tios and mortgage insurance premium Duvernay said In addition, the depart- ever they choose." ment is considering an increase in the "The (mortgage insurance) caps are a have criminal intentions, he said.

Duvernay addressed the the FHA mortgage insurance limit to partment has earmarked more funds local housing prices. Making this ad- to combat drug sales and other crimes vided through the Federal Housing buyers in areas such as the California Administration's (FHA) mortgage coast and the Northeast, where home he noted. "We must confront destrucinsurance program, improve the pres- price generally exceed the current tive behavior and strengthen the

HUD also is seeking to step up the federal fair housing law. Specifi- preservation of low-income multifamcally, he said HUD is concerned over ily housing, through an increase in FHA's loss of mortgage financing funding for the flexible subsidy proket share, compared to a 50 percent bilitation of older, deteriorated units Duvernay, the dilapidated condition try.

ing of low-income residents.

forts to fighting housing discrimination. "You are part of the solution," Duvernay said he noted that the department is planing to devote more the closing costs, subsequently were resources to the enforcement of the federal fair housing law. "We must address what race continues to do...in Currently, HUD is examining the denial of access to rental housing ways to simplify the loan-to-value ra- home ownership and loans," Duvernay said. "We are committed to helping all structure used in FHA underwriting, people have the freedom to live wher-

In subsidized housing situations, mortgage insurance limit, which is HUD is seeking to find a balance now \$151,725 in high-cost areas, he between fair housing enforcement noted, adding that higher down pay- and the screening of potential tenants ments may be tied to such an increase. to keep out those who might concern," he said. "We are looking at "HUD must not discriminate, but how and when they should be raised." we must find a way to weed out NAR has long supported tying criminals," Duvernay said. The dejustment would allow FHA to reach in public housing projects and other HUD-supported communities, social contract or rights and responsibilities," Duvrnay said. The Clinton administration is shifting away from the previous administration' focus on enabling public housing gram, Durernay said. This is part of tenants to purchase the units in rently has about 4 percent of the mar- the department's focus on major reha- which they live. According to in all aspects of the real estate indus-

The Clinton administration is share years ago. "We must find a way that could be used to help curtail the of many public housing units would chase properties. "The idea of provid-He praised Realtors for their ef- ing public housing residents with home owner ship opportunities is important. But, letting them buy public housing probably is too ambitious a goal,"

HUD's fiscal 1994 budget calls for large funding cuts it the tenant ownership conversion program, known as HOPE, and simultaneously provides for substantial increases in HOME, a block grant program that supports affordable housing construction and rehabilitation. Duvernay said HUD aims to streamline and deregulate HOME so the funds can be distributed more efficiently to communities. "We must enable communities to develop in a way that works," he said, pointing ing for Northwest Natural Gas. out that the economic health of each locality is intertwined with that of underground services, they can be other communities and the national

to assist HUD in rebuilding commu- or breaking an electric cable. nity spirit and improving housing conditions. "NAR and HUD share pipe that is widely used for natural gas the goals of decent, affordable hous- distribution is very susceptible to daming and fair housing opportunities for age from tools such as shovels and all," he said. The National Associa- post hole diggers. These are damages tion of Realtors, "The Voice for Real Estate," is the nation's largest trade association, representing nearly 750,000 members involved

Northwest Natural Cautions To Call Before Digging

ral Gas is asking anyone considering digging to call a service that will notify utilities to locate their underground facilities at no charge.

By calling the Utilities Notification Center two full working days before excavating, participating underground utilities are alerted to come out and locate and mark the including most large owners of underground facilities in many parts of Oregon and southwest Washing- the law that anyone digging must

"It doesn't matter if a person is planting a tree or building a fence on their property, it's the law to call before you dig," explained Bruce Paskett, field supervisor of Engineer-"If a person does not call and damages liable for all repair costs for damaged utilities-not to mention the hazard Duvernay asked NAR members that exists by rupturing a gas pipe

"For instance, the polyethylene 2DIG).

As the weather warms and Or- that can be avoided by calling before egonians' notions turn toward yard digging," he said. "Of course we don't work and gardening, Northwest Natu- want people damaging our services, but more than that, we want to make sure our customers are safe."

Paskett said that approximately 1,200 damages to natural gas facilities each year can be attributed to excavation. Nearly half of those are due to a failure of the excavator to notify the affected utilities of their intent to dig. the remaining damages lines. The Utilities Notification are attributed to excavators who Center has more than 190 subscribers weren't careful when digging around natural gas pipes.

"Where there is yellow paint, it's hand excavate the area with a shovel (instead of a backhoe) and to take due care not to damage the pipe once it is exposed,' Paskett said.

Last year, the center received 170,000 calls requesting locates.

The Utilities Notification Center provides coverage for most of Oregon and parts of southern Washington. In the Portland area, call (503) 246-6699. In Clark County, Washington, call (206) 696-4848. Other areas should call 1-800-332-2344 (or 1-800-332-

A different one-call system handles inquiries for utility locates in Oregon's Clatsop and Columbia counties. That number is 1-800-424-5555.

Labor Management Committee To Help Laid Off Workers

trict 1 and several unions announced "We are here to be advocates for all the formation of a joint labor-manage- employees." ment committee to assist the job-search and retraining efforts of employees jointly by Portland Public Schools, the who will be affected buy the school Unions, and the Oregon Dislocated budget shortfall.

nate community resources to help dis-provide classroom training, job search, located workers find jobs, appropriate and community and other services. training or retraining, and commu- The use of joint labor-management nity services, such as financial coun- committees to serve dislocated workseling or stress management. "By pool- ers has been successful nationwide in tration, union, and the community layoffs. Cooperation combined with before layoffs occur, we can help em- yearly intervention minimizes these ployees, find new jobs and attempt to adverse effects. lessen the impact of job loss, "said Pat the committee, nine representing Unions and two representing the school

Schools can be transferred to other and Pat North.

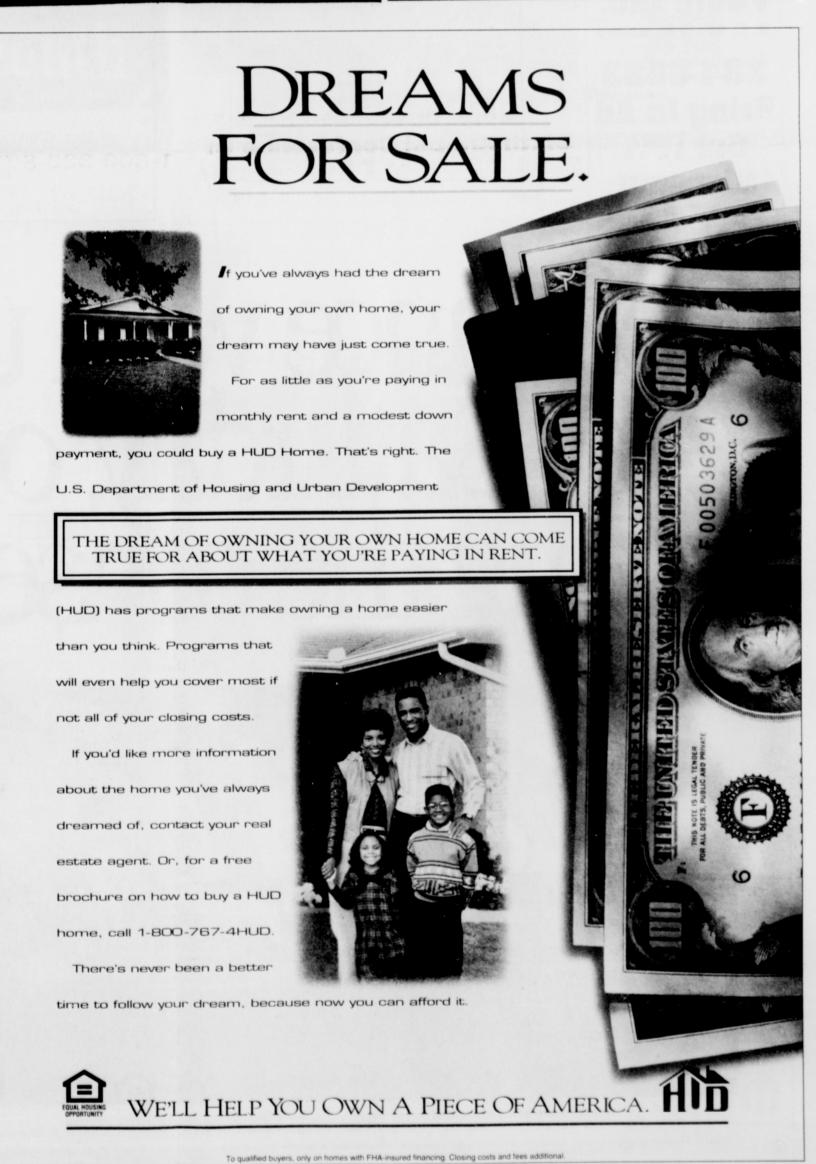
The Portland Public School Dis- employers in the area," said Grose.

The committee is supported Worker Unit. Federal Job Training The joint committee will coordi- Partnership Act funds are available to ing resources of the school adminis- lessening the trauma associated with

The union representatives in-Grose, Oregon Dislocated Worker clude: Steve Scheible and Tim Healy, Coordinator. The eleven members of School Employees International Union (SEOI#140) Susan Larsen, Toni Silva, and Linda Dick, representing Portadministration, will seek out training land Federation of Teachers and Clasand retraining services and will ac- sified Employees (PFTCE); Virginia tively seek employment for job-ready Ross, Sandi Rosenfeld, and Marc individuals. It weil also coordinate the Stein, Portland Association of Teachvarious local state, and Federal re- ers/Oregon Education Association sources available to dislocated work- ([AT/PEA); and Gerald Krahn and Linda Noel, District Council of Unions "By working together we believe (DCU). The Portland Public Schools that the talent at Portland Public representatives include Dr. Ed Schmitt

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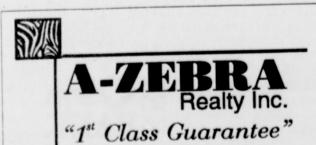
nated for honors this year by state and gram. In 1987/88, the school was one national education leaders, members of five Oregon schools wining the of the U.S. House of Representatives National Elementary School Recogand education reporter. America's nition Award for Excellence in Edu-Beset Schools recognized 177 out- cation, presented by the U.S. Departstanding public elementary schools in ment of Education. Alameda also was six areas: classroom innovation, par- one of five Oregon schools nominated ent/community involvement, extra- for the 1991/92 Blue Ribbon Elemencurricular activities, special-needs tary School of Excellence Recogniprograms, significant improvement tion Award from the Oregon Departand overall excellence.

Creative curriculum, varied extracurricular activities, nurturing cipal of the school, which is located at teachers, and supportive parent and 2732 N.E. Fremont.

Portland School District's community members were cited as

Alamdea previously has earned Morethan 550 schools were nomi-recognition for its outstanding proment of Education.

Charles Nakvasil serves as prin-





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