

Good Morning,

It gives me great pleasure to read the statement from Senator Walter Mondale.

Thank you for this recognition and inviting me to this dedication ceremony. I am sorry that I am unable to be there with you. I am honored to have my name be associated with this auditorium and with the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development. HUD's mission of increasing home ownership and access to affordable housing, free from discrimination, helps bring Americans closer to achieving the 'American Dream' each day.

Many years ago, while serving as a Senator, I urged Congress to pass the Fair Housing bill. I promised that if that bill became law, "the words justice and fairness" would mean so much more to millions of fellow Americans. And today, when reflecting back on the work accomplished through HUD and the Fair Housing Act, I can confidently say that they do.

While there are still many challenges today, the amount of obstacles that have been overcome through the work of HUD and the Fair Housing Act are truly noteworthy. Forty years ago, before the passage of the Fair Housing Act, an African American man testified before Congress about the discrimination he faced in finding a home. He was forced to commute many miles to work each day, merely because the color of his skin prevented him from buying a home just a few blocks from his office. Today, that same

man knows that he is free to choose where he wants to live, regardless of his race, religion, national origin, gender, familial status, or disability.

I applaud the efforts of HUD for making these changes happen. By working at both at the community and national levels, we can help create a society where home ownership becomes an attainable goal, and housing discrimination becomes a thing of the past.

I wish HUD and its employees continued success in their endeavors, and I thank you once again for honoring me today.