

Equalize Fresno's low-income housing

The federal government's efforts to increase mobility by requiring low-income housing to be spread throughout a city's neighborhoods, rich or poor, was described in George Hostetter's recent article.

The potential success of these efforts is supported by recent studies by Harvard economists. They found that where poor kids grow up has a huge effect on how much money they earn as adults. Looking at the 25 wealthiest U.S. counties and the 25 poorest counties, they were able to estimate to what degree where poor kids grow up affects their income compared with the national average. In the list of the 25 poorest counties, Fresno County was fourth from the bottom; its children would later earn almost \$41,000 less a year than the national average.

We know that reduced poverty means fewer gangs, less crime, fewer incarcerations, less dependence on welfare and other social services, fewer high school dropouts, and higher employment. Why wouldn't we want to take advantage of these social and economic savings? Does anyone doubt that growing up in zip code 93701, the poorest zip code in Fresno and perhaps the entire state, produces different results for its residents than if they lived in 93711? It's worth a try.

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