

C O P Y

UNITED STATES SENATE

Washington, D. C.
June 21, 1939

Dear Mr. Straus

I have been interested to learn that the low bid on the Housing Authority projects at Fort Worth proved to be below the estimates on these projects that had been approved by your office. The low bidder was J. E. Morgan and Sons of El Paso, Texas, and their bid, with the approval of the Fort Worth Housing Authority, is now in your Office awaiting final action.

I have learned informally, however, that your office is withholding approval on these projects because the specifications provide for the use of aluminum windows and while I have no personal interest in any matter of design or material that may enter into the construction of the dwellings in the Fort Worth projects, I am hoping that no difficulty will develop in your office which will further delay commencement of construction.

The original specifications prepared by leading architects of Fort Worth called for aluminum windows, and I understand that a memorandum was furnished you showing that while the original cost of these windows was somewhat higher than steel windows, which are advocated by your office, a saving of 29¢ per month for each dwelling unit would be effected by the use of the aluminum windows as provided for in the specifications.

I am further informed that the specifications as prepared by the Fort Worth architects were approved by the Fort Worth Housing Authority. It is my understanding from statements in U.S. Housing Authority Bulletins that it is your policy to leave to the local Housing Authorities the determination of materials, methods of construction, etc. inasmuch as primary responsibility for the projects rests with them. The following statement from U.S. Housing Authority Bulletin No. 12 has been called to my attention:

"It is, therefore, possible to use durable materials and methods of construction which require a minimum of operating maintenance, replacement, and insurance cost without causing any material increase in debt service to be met from rents."

I, therefore write to express the most earnest hope that you will give this matter your personal consideration, and that unless some reasonable objection can be sustained by competent architectural authorities indicating that the present plans in whole or in part would be inimical to the interests of the U.S. Government, the projects may receive your approval in order that construction may get under way without further delay.

Kindly advise me as to this, and oblige.

Hon. Nathan Straus, Administrator
U.S. Housing Authority
Washington, D. C.

Yours very sincerely,
(signed) Morris Sheppard