

## Foreword to the Second Edition

Our founders championed equal opportunity for all, knowing it was not a reality, but understanding that as a driving aspiration, this American Dream could keep us moving forward no matter what the future held. While there will always be a gap between where we are and where we want to be, every generation of Americans must always work to narrow it.

Today the gap is too large and the American Dream is out of reach for too many. Bill Goldsmith and coauthor Ed Blakely have long held that the most effective way to increase opportunity is to ensure that the poor are brought into the fabric of our communities. In the first edition of *Separate Societies*, Goldsmith and Blakely showed that the isolation of low-income individuals had exacerbated inequality and they outlined policies to remedy it.

My administration's domestic agenda reflected these views in our efforts to create more jobs and new businesses, reduce economic inequality, improve access to housing and quality education, and make our streets safe. We made important strides; however, many of these gains have since been erased. In the first decade of the new millennium, median wages have decreased, the number of families without health insurance has risen, and the number of people working full-time but still falling below the poverty line has increased.

As we confront these problems once again, we must look at the evidence. What went wrong, and most important, how can we get back on the right track?

How can we effectively uplift populations that are often scattered and frequently forgotten? How can our efforts achieve the greatest impact on

those at risk with the money we have to spend on them? In the broadest sense, how can we turn our good intentions into concrete, positive results?

In their new edition of *Separate Societies*, Goldsmith and Blakely address these *how* questions. After careful analysis of the issues that face us, they outline alternatives for state and federal policies and offer suggestions for how community groups and everyday people can make a difference. The authors argue that when governments and local organizations keep a careful eye on how new strategies are working, we can improve education, renew neighborhoods, ignite economic engines, and alleviate persistent inequalities in our cities.

We must build a country where no person is abandoned, where we pull people in instead of pushing them away, and where we all share the responsibilities, benefits, and sense of destiny. This begins by bringing opportunities to those who have the fewest—and who need them the most. That's what I tried to do as president and what I do now through the work of the William J. Clinton Foundation. Bill Goldsmith and Ed Blakely show us how to begin.

—President Bill Clinton  
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