

September 14, 2015

The Honorable John Boehner
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representative
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Harry Reid
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Boehner, Minority Leader Pelosi, Majority Leader McConnell, and Minority Leader Reid:

On behalf of the 207 undersigned national, local, and state groups representing civil rights, housing, community development, veterans, faith-based, and elder organizations, and public officials and businesses, call on you to stand with us to defend the existing federal programs and tools that protect Americans from housing discrimination. The Fair Housing Act is one of our nation's most cherished laws and has, for nearly fifty years, been employed to ensure that every American has housing choices free from the harmful impacts of housing discrimination and the consequences of residential segregation. Appallingly, the mechanisms and programs in place to fully protect the fair housing rights of Americans have recently come under attack in the House of Representatives.

In June, the House of Representatives passed its Fiscal Year 2016 the Commerce, Justice, Science (CJS) Appropriations bill, H.R. 2578, and its Transportation, Housing and Urban Development (THUD) appropriations bill, H.R. 2577, with highly concerning anti-fair housing amendments attached that would all but eliminate local private fair housing enforcement, and undermine the federal government's ability to protect Americans from housing discrimination and better provide opportunity in every neighborhood.

Amendments to the House's THUD bill: zero-out grants for local private enforcement of the Fair Housing Act; prohibit HUD from implementing its recently released Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH) rule, which gives local and state governments the data and tools they need to expand opportunity in every neighborhood and better comply with existing fair housing requirements; and prohibit HUD from enforcing its Discriminatory Effects rule, which provides a uniform standard for a widely-established legal doctrine that is used to challenge unjustified housing policies and practices that discriminate against groups protected by the Fair Housing Act. The House's CJS bill also included an amendment that prohibits the Department of Justice from taking any Fair Housing Act enforcement action using HUD's Discriminatory Effects rule.

These shameful and irresponsible amendments, individually and collectively, are an assault on the hard won civil rights of all Americans, and they send a clear message to housing providers and lenders that they can violate the law with impunity. We urge you to oppose any short-term or long-term funding bill that contains any of the aforementioned anti-fair housing policy riders.

While our nation has made great progress in addressing the incidence of housing discrimination and residential segregation, we still have much left to accomplish. This year, the Supreme Court, in a seminal fair housing case decision, reinforced the continuing importance of the Fair Housing Act and urged the Nation to continue to work toward its greater purpose. In *Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs v. The Inclusive Communities Project, Inc.*, Justice Kennedy authored the majority opinion, stating that: “Much progress remains to be made in our Nation’s continuing struggle against racial isolation....The Court acknowledges the Fair Housing Act’s continuing role in moving the nation toward a more integrated society.”

We stand united in opposition to any attempts to undermine the right of every American to access housing of their choice, in the neighborhood of their choice, free from discrimination. We urge you to stand with us for fair housing justice by vociferously supporting the mission of the Fair Housing Act and defending the tools and resources we all need to make it continue to work for Americans.

Sincerely,

National Organizations

9to5, National Association of Working Women
American Civil Liberties Union
American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME)
American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC)
The Arc of the United States
Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD)
Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law
Center for Women Policy Studies
Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities Housing Task Force
Consumer Action
Corporation for Enterprise Development (CFED)
Enterprise Community Partners
Family Equality Council
Human Rights Campaign
Justice For Families
LatinoJustice PRLDEF
The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights
League of United Latin American Citizens
NAACP
National Association of Consumer Advocates
National Association of Social Workers

National Center for Healthy Housing
 National Community Reinvestment Coalition
 National Congress of American Indians
 National Council of La Raza
 National Disability Rights Network
 National Fair Housing Alliance
 National Housing Law Project
 National Housing Trust
 National Housing Trust
 National LGBTQ Task Force Action Fund
 National Low Income Housing Coalition
 National Urban League
 National Women's Law Center
 NETWORK, A National Catholic Social Justice Lobby
 Paralyzed Veterans of America
 PolicyLink
 Poverty & Race Research Action Council
 TASH
 United Spinal Association

Local and State Organizations, Public Officials, and Businesses

Disability Law Center of Alaska	Anchorage	AK
Fair Housing Center of Northern Alabama	Birmingham	AL
Arkansas Interfaith Alliance	Little Rock	AR
Southwest Fair Housing Council	Tucson	AZ
Affordable Housing Clearinghouse	Lake Forest	CA
Fair Housing Foundation	Long Beach	CA
Law Office of Kim Savage	Long Beach	CA
Housing Rights Center	Los Angeles	CA
Inland Fair Housing and Mediation Board	Ontario	CA
California Reinvestment Coalition	San Francisco	CA
Fair Housing of Marin	San Rafael	CA
Fair Housing Council of Orange County	Santa Ana	CA
Project Sentinel	Santa Clara	CA
	South San Francisco	CA
Housing Equality Law Project	Denver	CO
Brothers Redevelopment, Inc.	Denver	CO
Del Norte Neighborhood Development Corp	Denver	CO
Denver Metro Fair Housing Center	Denver	CO

Denver Urban Renewal Authority	Denver	CO
Disability Law Colorado	Denver	CO
Habitat for Humanity of Metro Denver	Denver	CO
National Association for Black Veterans, Inc.	Denver	CO
NEWSED C.D.C.	Denver	CO
Northeast Denver Housing Center Inc.	Denver	CO
Urban Land Conservancy	Denver	CO
Community Resources and Housing Development Corporation	Westminster	CO
Connecticut Fair Housing Center	Hartford	CT
Fair Housing Center of the Greater Palm Beaches	Lantana	FL
Fair Housing Continuum, Inc.	Melbourne	FL
Housing Opportunities Project for Excellence (HOPE), Inc.	Miami	FL
Legal Aid Society of Palm Beach County, Inc.	West Palm Beach	FL
Paradise Properties of Florida, Inc.	West Palm Beach	FL
Savannah-Chatham County Fair Housing Council, Inc.	Savannah	GA
Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement	Kapolei	HI
League of Human Dignity, Inc.	Council Bluffs	IA
American Civil Liberties Union of Iowa	Des Moines	IA
Access Concepts and Training, Inc.	Boise	ID
DisAbility Rights Idaho	Boise	ID
Gary E. Hanes & Associates, LLC	Boise	ID
Intermountain Fair Housing Council, Inc.	Boise	ID
Access Living	Chicago	IL
Chicago Area Fair Housing Alliance	Chicago	IL
Housing Action Illinois	Chicago	IL
Housing Choice Partners of Illinois	Chicago	IL
Woodstock Institute	Chicago	IL
Calvin Bradford & Associates, Ltd.	Evanston	IL
South Suburban Housing Center	Homewood	IL
Oak Park Regional Housing Center	Oak Park	IL
HOPE Fair Housing Center	West Chicago	IL
Bernard Kleina Photography	Wheaton	IL
Open Communities	Winnetka	IL
accessABILITY, Center for Independent Living	Indianapolis	IN
Back Home in Indiana Alliance	Indianapolis	IN
Central Indiana Realtist Association	Indianapolis	IN
Coburn Place Safe Haven	Indianapolis	IN
Fair Housing Center of Central Indiana	Indianapolis	IN
Indianapolis Housing Center	Indianapolis	IN
JB Real Estate Consultants	Indianapolis	IN
NeighborLink Indianapolis	Indianapolis	IN

Attic	Vincennes	IN
Homeless & Housing Coalition of Kentucky	Frankfort	KY
Louisiana Housing Alliance	Baton Rouge	LA
Family Resources of New Orleans	New Orleans	LA
National Coalition of 100 Black Women, Greater New Orleans Chapter	New Orleans	LA
New Orleans Cooperative Development Project	New Orleans	LA
Puentes New Orleans	New Orleans	LA
Fair Housing Center of Greater Boston	Boston	MA
The Community Builders, Inc.	Boston	MA
Alliance of Cambridge Tenants (ACT)	Cambridge	MA
Paralyzed Veterans of America, New England Chapter	Walpole	MA
Baltimore Neighborhoods, Inc	Baltimore	MD
Maryland Disability Law Center	Baltimore	MD
Maine Equal Justice Partners	Augusta	ME
ABG Consulting	Gray	ME
Neighborhood Housing League a project of The Visible Community	Lewiston	ME
Homeless Voices for Justice	Portland	ME
Maine Affordable Housing Coalition	Portland	ME
Fair Housing Center of Metropolitan Detroit	Detroit	MI
Neighborhood Service Organization Michigan	Detroit	MI
Fair Housing Center of West Michigan	Grand Rapids	MI
Fair Housing Center of Southwest Michigan	Kalamazoo	MI
Integrated Community Solutions, Inc.	Fridley	MN
Minneapolis Highrise Representative Council	Minneapolis	MN
Metropolitan Interfaith Council on Affordable Housing (MICAHA)	St. Paul	MN
Minnesota Housing Partnership	St. Paul	MN
Empower Missouri	Jefferson City	MO
Metropolitan St. Louis Equal Housing and Opportunity Council	St. Louis	MO
Disability Rights Mississippi	Jackson	MS
Montana Fair Housing	Butte	MT
Reinvestment Partners	Durham	NC
S J Adams Consulting	Durham	NC
Greensboro Housing Coalition	Greensboro	NC
Disability Rights NC	Raleigh	NC
Protection & Advocacy Project	Bismarck	ND
Out Front Properties, Inc.	Bellevue	NE
High Plains Community Development Corporation	Chadron	NE
League of Human Dignity, Inc.	Lincoln	NE
Nebraska Housing Developers Association	Lincoln	NE
Fair Housing Center of Nebraska-Iowa	Omaha	NE

Disability Rights Center-NH	Concord	NH
Fair Share Housing Center	Cherry Hill	NJ
Fair Housing Council of Northern NJ	Hackensack	NJ
Disability Rights New Jersey	Trenton	NJ
	Upper Saddle River	NJ
Andrew Goodman Foundation	Santa Fe	NM
New Mexico Coalition to End Homelessness	Las Vegas/Reno	NV
Silver State Fair Housing Council	Bohemia	NY
Long Island Housing Services	Buffalo	NY
Housing Opportunities Made Equal, Inc.	New York	NY
Fair Housing Justice Center	Syosset	NY
ERASE Racism	Syracuse	NY
CNY Fair Housing, Inc.	Valley Stream	NY
Taylor's Holdings, LLC	White Plains	NY
Westchester Residential Opportunities, Inc.	Akron	OH
Fair Housing Contact Service, Inc.	Akron	OH
Fair Housing Advocates	Cincinnati	OH
Housing Opportunities Made Equal	Cleveland	OH
Cleveland Tenants Organization	Cleveland	OH
Emerald Development and Economic Network (EDEN), Inc.	Cleveland	OH
Housing Research & Advocacy Center	Cleveland	OH
Neighborhood Housing Services of Greater Cleveland	Cleveland	OH
Heights Community Congress	Cleveland Heights	OH
AIDS Resource Center Ohio	Columbus	OH
Central Ohio Fair Housing Association	Columbus	OH
Coalition on Homelessness & Housing in Ohio	Columbus	OH
Ohio Poverty Law Center	Columbus	OH
Access Center for Independent Living	Dayton	OH
East End Community Services Corporation	Dayton	OH
Fairchild for Dayton	Dayton	OH
HomeOwnership Center of Greater Dayton	Dayton	OH
Miami Valley Fair Housing Center	Dayton	OH
Wesley Community Center	Dayton	OH
Ohio Partners for Affordable Energy	Findlay	OH
Fair Housing Resource Center, Inc.	Painesville	OH
Advocates for Basic Legal Equality, Inc	Toledo	OH
Northwest Ohio Development Agency	Toledo	OH
Toledo Fair Housing Center	Toledo	OH
Elders In Action	Portland	OR
Fair Housing Council of Oregon	Portland	OR
Housing Equality Center of Pennsylvania	Fort Washington	PA

Housing Alliance of Pennsylvania	Jenkintown	PA
Rhode Island Coalition for the Homeless	Pawtucket	RI
Creative Compassion Inc	Crossville	TN
Paralyzed veterans of America, Midsouth Chapter	Memphis	TN
Tennessee Fair Housing Council	Nashville	TN
Austin Tenants' Council	Austin	TX
Texas Low Income Housing Information Service	Austin	TX
Inclusive Communities Project	Dallas	TX
North Texas Fair Housing Center	Dallas	TX
Texas Tenants' Union	Dallas	TX
Greater Houston Fair Housing Center	Houston	TX
Disability Law Center	Salt Lake City	UT
National Alliance on Mental Illness	Arlington	VA
Piedmont Housing Alliance	Charlottesville	VA
Paralyzed Veterans of America, Mid Atlantic Chapter	Chesterfield	VA
Housing Opportunities Made Equal of Virginia, inc.	Richmond	VA
Housing Opportunity Made Equal of Virginia	Richmond	VA
Virginia Housing Coalition	Richmond	VA
Westgate Housing Inc.	Brattleboro	VT
Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity Fair Housing Project	Burlington	VT
Vermont Affordable Housing Coalition	Burlington	VT
Community of Vermont Elders	Montpelier	VT
Disability Rights Washington	Seattle	WA
Northwest Fair Housing Alliance	Spokane	WA
Fair Housing Center of Washington	Tacoma	WA
Movin' Out, Inc.	Madison	WI
Wisconsin Partnership for Housing Development	Madison	WI
Metropolitan Milwaukee Fair Housing Council	Milwaukee	WI
Select Milwaukee	Milwaukee	WI

CC: United States House of Representatives
United States Senate