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
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
Brothers Redevelopment, Inc. Denver CO
Del Norte Neighborhood Development Corp Denver CO
Denver Metro Fair Housing Center Denver CO
Denver Urban Renewal Authority
Disability Law Colorado
Habitat for Humanity of Metro Denver
National Association for Black Veterans, Inc.
NEWSED C.D.C.
Northeast Denver Housing Center Inc.
Urban Land Conservancy
Community Resources and Housing Development Corporation
Connecticut Fair Housing Center
Fair Housing Center of the Greater Palm Beaches
Fair Housing Continuum, Inc.
Housing Opportunities Project for Excellence (HOPE), Inc.
Legal Aid Society of Palm Beach County, Inc.
Paradise Properties of Florida, Inc
Savannah-Chatham County Fair Housing Council, Inc.
Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement
League of Human Dignity, Inc.
American Civil Liberties Union of Iowa
Access Concepts and Training, Inc
DisAbility Rights Idaho
Gary E. Hanes & Associates, LLC
Intermountain Fair Housing Council, Inc.
Access Living
Chicago Area Fair Housing Alliance
Housing Action Illinois
Housing Choice Partners of Illinois
Woodstock Institute
Calvin Bradford & Associates, Ltd.
South Suburban Housing Center
Oak Park Regional Housing Center
HOPE Fair Housing Center
Bernard Kleina Photography
Open Communities
accessABILITY, Center for Independent Living
Back Home in Indiana Alliance
Central Indiana Realtist Association
Coburn Place Safe Haven
Fair Housing Center of Central Indiana
Indianapolis Housing Center
JB Real Estate Consultants
NeighborLink Indianapolis
Attic
Homeless & Housing Coalition of Kentucky
Louisiana Housing Alliance
Family Resources of New Orleans
National Coalition of 100 Black Women, Greater New Orleans Chapter
New Orleans Cooperative Development Project
Puentes New Orleans
Fair Housing Center of Greater Boston
The Community Builders, Inc.
Alliance of Cambridge Tenants (ACT)
Paralyzed Veterans of America, New England Chapter
Baltimore Neighborhoods, Inc
Maryland Disability Law Center
Maine Equal Justice Partners
ABG Consulting
Neighborhood Housing League a project of The Visible Community
Homeless Voices for Justice
Maine Affordable Housing Coalition
Fair Housing Center of Metropolitan Detroit
Neighborhood Service Organization Michigan
Fair Housing Center of West Michigan
Fair Housing Center of Southwest Michigan
Integrated Community Solutions, Inc.
Minneapolis Highrise Representative Council
Metropolitan Interfaith Council on Affordable Housing (MICAH)
Minnesota Housing Partnership
Empower Missouri
Metropolitan St. Louis Equal Housing and Opportunity Council
Disability Rights Mississippi
Montana Fair Housing
Reinvestment Partners
S J Adams Consulting
Greensboro Housing Coalition
Disability Rights NC
Protection & Advocacy Project
Out Front Properties, Inc.
High Plains Community Development Corporation
League of Human Dignity, Inc.
Nebraska Housing Developers Association
Fair Housing Center of Nebraska-Iowa

Vincennes IN
Frankfort KY
Baton Rouge LA
New Orleans LA
New Orleans LA
New Orleans LA
Boston MA
Boston MA
Cambridge MA
Walpole MA
Baltimore MD
Baltimore MD
Augusta ME
Gray ME
Lewiston ME
Portland ME
Portland ME
Detroit MI
Detroit MI
Grand Rapids MI
Kalamazoo MI
Fridley MN
Minneapolis MN
St. Paul MN
St. Paul MN
Jefferson City MO
St. Louis MO
Jackson MS
Butte MT
Durham NC
Durham NC
Greensboro NC
Raleigh NC
Bismarck ND
Bellevue NE
Chadron NE
Lincoln NE
Lincoln NE
Omaha NE
Disability Rights Center-NH
Fair Share Housing Center
Fair Housing Council of Northern NJ
Disability Rights New Jersey
Andrew Goodman Foundation
New Mexico Coalition to End Homelessness
Silver State Fair Housing Council
Long Island Housing Services
Housing Opportunities Made Equal, Inc.
Fair Housing Justice Center
ERASE Racism
CNY Fair Housing, Inc.
Taylor's Holdings, LLC
Westchester Residential Opportunities, Inc.
Fair Housing Contact Service, Inc.
Fair Housing Advocates
Housing Opportunities Made Equal
Cleveland Tenants Organization
Emerald Development and Economic Network (EDEN), Inc.
Housing Research & Advocacy Center
Neighborhood Housing Services of Greater Cleveland
Heights Community Congress
AIDS Resource Center Ohio
Central Ohio Fair Housing Association
Coalition on Homelessness & Housing in Ohio
Ohio Poverty Law Center
Access Center for Independent Living
East End Community Services Corporation
Fairchild for Dayton
HomeOwnership Center of Greater Dayton
Miami Valley Fair Housing Center
Wesley Community Center
Ohio Partners for Affordable Energy
Fair Housing Resource Center, Inc.
Advocates for Basic Legal Equality, Inc
Northwest Ohio Development Agency
Toledo Fair Housing Center
Elders In Action
Fair Housing Council of Oregon
Housing Equality Center of Pennsylvania
Concord NH
Cherry Hill NJ
Hackensack NJ
Trenton NJ
Upper Saddle River NJ
Santa Fe NM
Las Vegas/Reno NV
Bohemia NY
Buffalo NY
New York NY
Syosset NY
Syracuse NY
Valley Stream NY
White Plains NY
Akron OH
Akron OH
Cincinnati OH
Cleveland OH
Cleveland OH
Cleveland OH
Cleveland Heights OH
Columbus OH
Columbus OH
Columbus OH
Columbus OH
Dayton OH
Dayton OH
Dayton OH
Dayton OH
Dayton OH
Dayton OH
Dayton OH
Findlay OH
Painesville OH
Toledo OH
Toledo OH
Toledo OH
Portland OR
Portland OR
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