

For Immediate Release  
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## **Civil Rights, Housing, and Community Development Organizations Call on HUD to Maintain a Critical Fair Housing Tool and Not to Roll Back the Promise of the Fair Housing Act**

**Washington, DC** – 76 national civil rights, faith-based, affordable housing and other organizations have voiced their strong opposition to HUD’s sudden and short-sighted decision to effectively suspend the Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH) regulation.

Nearly 50 years ago, Congress adopted the Fair Housing Act, landmark legislation necessary to end discrimination in housing and eliminate the barriers created by segregation. The AFFH regulation —designed with considerable public input and piloted extensively — was adopted in 2015 and was a critical and long overdue step in carrying out Congress’ intent. It provided jurisdictions with a roadmap and tools for compliance and included measures for accountability. Without warning, HUD has decided effectively to suspend the regulation, leaving local jurisdictions confused, giving local residents less voice in important decisions about their communities, and reinstating an approach to fair housing that the Government Accountability Office found to be ineffective and poorly administered.

“HUD’s effective suspension of the rule does nothing to help local governments fulfill their fair housing responsibilities to create equitable, healthy communities and provide access to housing without discrimination,” says Angela Glover Blackwell, CEO for PolicyLink. “It is the wrong move, particularly at a time when housing needs are so severe and housing and community development resources are so scarce. And by taking this step, HUD is abrogating its duty to carry out the mission Congress assigned it 50 years ago.”

“Americans strongly believe that a zip code should not determine a child’s future, and that everyone – regardless of their race or national origin, the language they speak, or whether they have children or have a disability – should have access to the opportunities they need to succeed,” said Shanna L. Smith, president and CEO for the National Fair Housing Alliance. “But we are falling short of achieving that goal. Actions taken over many years by HUD, other government agencies and the private sector have left us more segregated than we were 100 years ago. That has led to concentrated poverty and weaker communities and undermines our prosperity. We need HUD to enforce this important rule, not suspend it.”

“The administration’s abrupt decision to effectively suspend this critical regulation is misguided,” says Diane Yentel, president and CEO of the National Low Income Housing Coalition. “The federal government, states and local communities have been required by law since 1968 to work to undo the segregated communities that federal housing policy created in the first place. Suspending the tools that help communities meet that obligation, without any input from key stakeholders, is a step in the wrong direction.”

“The obligation of local governments to ‘affirmatively further fair housing’ is essential to fulfill the promises of the Fair Housing Act, particularly this year, the 50th Anniversary of this key

civil rights law,” said Sherrilyn Ifill, President and Director-Counsel of the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. “HUD’s proposed suspension would roll back one of the law’s most critical tools to correct structural inequality and racial segregation and represents yet another attack by this Administration on communities of color across the country.”

“HUD’s decision to suspend a critical rule that has helped promote fair housing across the country is firm demonstration of Secretary Ben Carson’s hostility to fair enforcement and implementation of the Fair Housing Act,” said Kristen Clarke, president and executive director of the Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law. “We will not stand by idly as HUD works to roll back the important gains that have been made to promote fair housing opportunities across the country.”

HUD’s announcement today is a serious loss for fair housing and puts the promise of making every neighborhood a community of opportunity further out of reach. We call on HUD to reverse its decision, withdraw this notice, and move ahead with implementation and enforcement of this important fair housing rule. And we call on Congress to provide policy and budgetary oversight of HUD to ensure it is delivering on the promise of fair and equitable housing.

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This statement is issued on behalf of:

Action Center on Race and the Economy Institute  
American Civil Liberties Union  
Association of Programs for Rural Independent Living

Autism Society of America  
Autistic Self Advocacy Network  
California Reinvestment Coalition  
CarsonWatch  
Center for Popular Democracy  
Center for Responsible Lending  
Center for Social Innovation  
Center for the Study of Social Policy  
Center on Budget and Policy Priorities  
Coalition on Human Needs  
Consortium for Citizens With Disabilities Housing Task Force  
Consumer Action  
Consumer Federation of America  
Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund (DREDF)  
Enterprise Community Partners  
Equal Justice Society  
First Focus  
FORGE, Inc.  
GLMA: Health Professionals Advancing LGBT Equality  
Grounded Solutions Network  
Housing Assistance Council  
Impact Fund  
Japanese American Citizens League  
Lambda Legal  
LatinoJustice PRLDEF  
Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law  
Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC)  
Local Progress  
LOCUS: Responsible Real Estate Developers and Investors  
Low Income Investment Fund  
NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc.  
National Alliance of Community Economic Development Associations  
National Alliance on Mental Illness  
National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum (NAPAWF)  
National Association for Latino Community Asset Builders  
National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities  
National Association of Human Rights Workers  
National Center for Lesbian Rights  
National Center for Transgender Equality  
National Coalition for Asian Pacific American Community Development (CAPACD)  
National Community Reinvestment Coalition

National Consumer Law Center (on behalf of its low-income clients)  
National Council of Churches  
National Disability Rights Network  
National Education Association  
National Equality Action Team (NEAT)  
National Fair Housing Alliance  
National Health Care for the Homeless Council  
National Housing Law Project  
National Housing Trust  
National Juvenile Justice Network  
National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty  
National LGBTQ Task Force  
National Low Income Housing Coalition  
National Network to End Domestic Violence  
National Urban League  
Paralyzed Veterans of America  
PFLAG National  
PolicyLink  
Poor Peoples Economic Human Rights Campaign  
Poverty & Race Research Action Council  
Pride at Work  
Prosperity Now  
Public Advocates Inc.  
Public Citizen  
Smart Growth America  
Technical Assistance Collaborative  
The Arc of the United States  
The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights  
Transgender Law Center  
Treatment Communities of America  
UnidosUS (formerly National Council of La Raza)  
United Way Worldwide