

Christene Fahey  
National Low Income  
Housing Coalition  
662-1530

Dear Representative:

We the undersigned 60 national and local organizations strongly urge you to take quick and positive action on the Fish-Edwards Housing Amendments Act - HR 1158.

Passage of the bill this year is critical since fair housing legislation has not passed since the Civil Rights Act of 1968. The current law, Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 makes discrimination illegal. However, the current law fails to provide adequate protection and enforcement procedures against housing discrimination. Past and present Secretaries of HUD and members of Congress from both parties, as well as former President Carter and President Reagan have called for stronger enforcement provisions for fair housing.

Housing discrimination based on race and national origin persists in our society as evidenced by HUD's estimates that at least two million incidents occur each year. Housing discrimination often leads to homelessness, especially among female headed households with children. The undersigned believe that all people should have the freedom to select the home and location of their choice.

The Fish-Edwards Housing Amendments Act - HR 1158 corrects Title VIII in the following areas. First, HR 1158 would establish a fair and expeditious method of redress by incorporating into the law an Administrative Law Judge hearing process. This hearing process is simpler than a court's, and assures that an investigation will occur and a final decision on the complaint will be made and enforced.

Second, HR 1158 extends protections to include disabled persons and their families with children. Disabled people, of whom there are approximately 36 million, continue to be excluded from large segments of the housing market. Families with children often are denied housing simply because they have children. A 1980 HUD national survey found that 26 percent of the nation's rental housing units ban families with children. In California alone, a 1979 survey of five major cities found that 53 to 71 percent of their rental market was closed to families with children. All Americans will benefit from a stronger Fair Housing Law. For all these reasons, we urge you to move quickly on the Fair Housing Amendments Act - HR 1158.

ACORN

Alexandria Low Income Housing Coalition

American Planning Association

Asian Americans for Equality

Association of American University Women

B'nai B'rith Women

Black Women's Agenda

Bucks County Tenants Association

Callahan Neighborhood Association

*Housing*



Catherine McAuley Housing Foundation  
City-Wide Resident Council  
Coalition on Human Needs  
Common Ground  
Community Resources for Independent Living  
Congregations United for Housing  
CRLA Foundation  
EANC Incorporated  
Eastern Paralyzed Veterans Association  
Endeppendence Center of Northern Virginia  
Fair Housing Contact Service  
Family and Children's Service  
Friends Committee on National Legislation  
Habitat for Humanity of Charlotte, NC  
Hamilton Heights Neighborhood Organization, Inc.  
Hartford Neighborhood Housing Coalition  
Housing Association of Delaware Valley and Philadelphia  
Human Development Services of Port Chester, NY  
Interfaith Housing  
Interfaith Development Corporation Bucks County, PA  
Jobs with Peace  
Massachusetts Tenants Organization  
Michigan Housing Coalition  
National Association of Community Health Centers  
National Association Housing and Redevelopment Officials  
National Federation of Housing Counselors  
National Neighborhood Coalition  
National Womens Political Caucus  
National Coalition of the Homeless  
National Low Income Housing Coalition  
National Leased Housing Association  
National Rural Housing Coalition  
National Council of Senior Citizens  
National Council of LaRaza  
National Organization of Women  
National Organization of Women - Legal Defense and Education Fund  
New York Hispanic Housing Coalition  
Northside Preservation Commission  
Ohio Housing Coalition  
Omaha Housing Authority  
Project for Equal Educational Rights (NOW-LDEF)  
Riverside County Fair Housing Program  
Shared Housing Coalition  
Tenants Action Group of Philadelphia  
Texas Alliance for Human Need  
Trinity Chicago Coalition  
Urban League of Greater Hartford  
Virginia Task Force  
Women and Poverty Project  
Women's Legal Defense Fund  
Women's Equity Action League