



NATIONAL COUNCIL OF  
**LA RAZA**

Raúl Yzaguirre, President

JUN 24 1988

**National Office**

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June 22, 1988

Dear Representative,

On behalf of the National Council of La Raza, we urge your support for the passage of the Fair Housing Amendments Act (H.R. 1158), as reported out of the House Judiciary Committee and modified by the Fish Amendment. This major civil rights legislation will strengthen fair housing enforcement and expand coverage to include families with children and the disabled.

In spite of the passage of fair housing legislation 20 years ago, discriminatory practices continue to be used against Hispanics and other minorities. Hispanic need timely resolution of their complaints, and typically cannot afford remedies which require them to take individual legal action. We therefore support the Fish Amendment, which authorizes use of administrative law judges to address the complaints of aggrieved individuals in an expeditious manner, while maintaining procedural protections for those charged with discrimination.

Hispanics are both disproportionately poor and inadequately housed, but low income alone cannot fully explain the poor housing conditions in which many Hispanics live. According to an internal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) study, even when income is controlled for, Hispanics are more likely than Whites to live in substandard housing; the study concludes that a primary reason for this disparity is housing discrimination. In addition, recent HUD study shows that 75% of rental units either exclude or have restrictions against families with children. Because Hispanic households are more likely to have children than the general population, these restrictions disproportionately affect Hispanics.

H.R. 1158 will provide important new safeguards for families with children, but the legislation does not preclude landlords or developers from excluding families from certain kinds of housing for legitimate reasons such as applying occupancy standards and other reasonable eligibility criteria. In addition, it exempts senior citizen housing which is government subsidized or is otherwise qualified as "housing for older persons."

We urge your support for this major civil rights legislation, which is vital to Hispanic Americans' attempt to secure equal access to decent housing. Thank you for your consideration of our views.

Sincerely,

Raul Yzaguirre  
President