



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20515

AL GREEN  
9TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT  
HOUSTON, TEXAS

May 10, 2011

## FIGHT HOUSING DISCRIMINATION

### *Co-sponsor H.R. 284, the Veterans, Women, Families with Children, and Persons with Disabilities Housing Fairness Act of 2011*

Dear Colleague:

Despite the passage of the Fair Housing Act more than 40 years ago, approximately 4 million fair housing violations are believed to occur each year. However, according to the National Fair Housing Alliance, just 30,000 are reported to federal, state, and local fair housing authorities and only a handful are investigated and result in charges. This number is entirely too low when we know housing discrimination to be one of the root causes of the current foreclosure crisis.


Fair housing education and enforcement, primarily provided by private, non-profit fair housing organizations, play an important role in fighting housing discrimination and predatory lending. With support from the federal Fair Housing Initiatives Program (FHIP), these organizations investigate over half of the nation's reported housing discrimination complaints, counsel people who have been victims of housing discrimination, and enforce fair housing laws through housing testing programs. The role of FHIP-funded nonprofits in enforcing fair housing laws has become more important given the recent decline of housing discrimination charges filed by the Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Department of Justice.

The Housing Fairness Act would:

1. Authorize \$15 million annually over five years for HUD to administer a nationwide testing program to measure patterns of adverse treatment based on race, color, religion, sex, familial status, disability or national origin in rentals, real estate sales, and lending practices. HUD would be required to report to Congress the results of the testing program every two years.
2. Increase annual funding for the Fair Housing Initiatives Program from the \$26 million level authorized in 1994 to the current appropriated level of \$42.5 million through FY 2016. This funding would support enforcement, education and outreach by private, non-profit fair housing centers.
3. Require HUD to administer a competitive matching grant program for private non-profit organizations to examine the causes of housing discrimination and segregation, as well as their effects on education, poverty and economic development. A non-federal match of 50 percent would be required by the recipient organization. \$5 million would be authorized annually through FY 2016 for this program.

Join me in fighting housing discrimination and enforcing the Fair Housing Act. **To co-sponsor the Housing Fairness Act, please contact Susie Saavedra in my office at [Susie.saavedra@mail.house.gov](mailto:Susie.saavedra@mail.house.gov)**

Sincerely,



AL GREEN  
Member of Congress