

April
2022

Partnership Policy Spotlight

Community Action Recognizes Fair Housing Month



FAIR HOUSING & COMMUNITY ACTION

Access to safe, affordable, stable shelter is a human right and vital to creating opportunities for all community members. As part of our mission to help Community Action Agencies (CAA) serve their customers, the National Community Action Partnership (NCAP) supports multiple housing initiatives, including: expanding current housing assistance programs; accelerating affordable housing production; dismantling restrictive state and local zoning rules; and strengthening consumer protections against predatory lending schemes.

But meaningful implementation of these initiatives requires not only strengthening protections against all types of housing discrimination, but systematically enforcing those protections. It has been 54 years since the passage of the Fair Housing Act (FHA), but there is still much work to be done to ensure that access to housing is fair and equitable. [April is Fair Housing Month](#) and NCAP is celebrating



the work being done by our members and partners to make truly equitable housing opportunity a reality.

THE GOVERNMENT & PURPOSEFUL HOUSING DISCRIMINATION

Housing discrimination has been present in the United States since its inception and continues to this day. Throughout our history, instead of working towards eradicating discrimination, **policymakers at every level of government have promulgated rules that create and exacerbate inequities in our housing system.** Governments instituted explicitly race-based policies, including

local exclusionary zoning rules, segregation requirements in public housing projects, mortgage insurance prohibitions, and redlining. The Supreme Court did not rule private neighborhood race-restrictive agreements unconstitutional until 1948.

RECENT CHALLENGES & NCAP ENGAGEMENT

Discriminatory housing trends continued into the early 21st century with limited government oversight of [lenders targeting communities of color](#) with predatory subprime mortgages, [well-documented bias in the appraisal of Black-owned real estate](#), and [discrimination](#)

[against members of the LGBTQIA+ community](#). In 2019 and 2020, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) created rules that rolled back protections by [weakening fair housing requirements](#), [codifying a more burdensome threshold for bringing FHA discrimination claims](#), and [allowing single-sex shelters to deny service to transgender individuals](#). **NCAP submitted comments** voicing strong **opposition to these changes** and advocated to keep fair housing protections in place. Each of these rules has since been withdrawn, repealed, or struck down by federal courts.

THE CURRENT STATE OF FAIR HOUSING

Today, a number of fair housing initiatives have refocused the conversation on ending homelessness and making fair housing more accessible to all. [HUD's House America initiative](#) is leveraging American Rescue Plan funding to re-house 100,000 households and begin the process of constructing 20,000 more affordable housing units. The administration's [Justice40 Initiative](#) is prioritizing retrofitting affordable housing units in historically underserved communities. There has also been progress on appraisal bias

through the [Property Appraisal and Valuation Equity Task Force Action Plan](#), which recommends policy changes that will enhance enforcement of unlawful discrimination and enhance equity at all stages of residential valuations. **And of course, hundreds of CAAs across the country continue their crucial work developing new housing and placing thousands of people into safe, affordable homes!**

GET ENGAGED!

Advocacy is part of Community Action's charge and there are lots of ways to voice your support for fair housing practices with policymakers at all levels of government! Check out [HUD's](#)

[Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity's landing page](#) for all things Fair Housing Month, including their [outreach toolkit with posters, virtual backgrounds, graphics, and social media](#). The [National Fair Housing Alliance \(NFHA\)](#) is also a great stop for housing equity resources and they've organized multiple events throughout Fair Housing Month. For more information on the status of [racial equity and fair housing policies](#), [head to the National Low Income Housing Coalition \(NLIHC\) landing page](#).

Our Advocacy

FEDERAL ACTIONS WE'RE TRACKING

- [S. 1368 – American Housing and Economic Mobility Act](#)
- [H.R. 4286 – Fair & Equal Housing Act](#)
- [H.R. 4496 – Ending Homelessness Act](#)
- [H.R. 4497 – Housing is Infrastructure Act](#)
- [S. 2182 – Eviction Crisis Act](#)

NCAP is a member of NLIHC's **Opportunity Starts at Home** coalition, which posts [opportunities for individuals and organizations to Take Action](#) and voice support for housing initiatives!

NLIHC has just published their comprehensive annual [Advocates Guide for 2022](#), an invaluable resource for all things housing policy, with information, tips, and strategies for effective housing advocacy!

