

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

May 8, 2024

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden  
President  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Biden:

Thank you for your dedication to the advancement of fair housing for all. Your commitment ensures that everyone has the opportunity to choose from a range of housing options in communities they can afford regardless of their race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, familial status, disability, or religious beliefs. For those reasons, we urge your administration to immediately release the final “Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing” (AFFH) rule proposed by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) more than a year ago.<sup>1</sup> As you know, the nation is grappling with a fair and affordable housing crisis. Finalizing the rule would pave the way to broader opportunities for historically disadvantaged families to establish themselves in communities where they can thrive.

America is contending with a variety of housing issues – including surging rents, increasing homelessness, and roadblocks to the American dream of homeownership. It is more important than ever to provide environments for every community to have quality housing within affordable reach. However, discrimination and inequities in housing not only perpetuate these crises, but have a rebounding effect in every aspect of life. Access to quality education, healthcare, transportation, and employment should never be determined by zip code.

Thankfully, HUD’s proposed AFFH rule<sup>2</sup> would aid local government in creating a true fair housing environment. By forming goals for addressing fair housing concerns, in conjunction

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<sup>1</sup> Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing, 88 Fed. Reg. 8516 (Feb. 9, 2023) (explaining that “[t]his rule proposes to retain much of the 2015 AFFH Rule’s core planning process, with certain improvements such as a more robust community engagement requirement, a streamlined required analysis, greater transparency, and an increased emphasis on goal setting and measuring progress. It also includes mechanisms to hold program participants accountable for achieving positive fair housing outcomes and complying with their obligation to affirmatively further fair housing, modeled after those processes under other Federal civil rights statutes that apply to recipients of Federal financial assistance.”).

<sup>2</sup> Press Release, U.S. Dep’t of Housing and Urban Development, HUD Announces New Proposed ‘Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing’ Rule, Taking a Major Step Towards Rooting Out Longstanding Inequities in Housing and Fostering Inclusive Communities, HUD No. 23-013 (Jan. 19, 2023), [https://www.hud.gov/press/press\\_releases\\_media\\_advisories/HUD\\_No\\_23\\_013](https://www.hud.gov/press/press_releases_media_advisories/HUD_No_23_013) (stating, in relevant part, “this proposed rule meets President Biden’s call in his first days in office to fully enforce the Fair Housing Act, outlined in Memorandum on Redressing Our Nation’s and the Federal Government’s History of Discriminatory Housing Practices and Policies.”).

with the public that they serve, they will be empowered to take significant steps towards accountability, transparency, and oversight.<sup>3</sup> Additionally, this rule helps connect every family with the necessary resources for success by helping their cities, countries, states, and other entities proactively invest in fostering inclusion within their own communities.

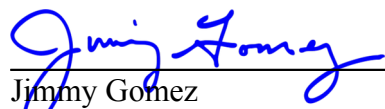
Until the AFFH rule is released, the Fair Housing Act's promises to prevent discrimination and affirmatively further fair housing will remain unrealized, even 56 years after its enactment. We urge your administration to finally release this crucial tool in the struggle for civil rights and accessible housing to hold our institutions accountable and create communities where everyone can live with dignity.

Sincerely,



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Pramila Jayapal  
Chair  
Congressional Progressive  
Caucus



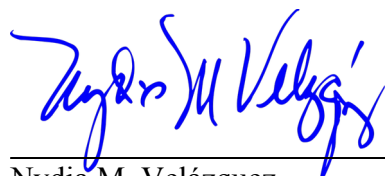
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Jimmy Gomez  
Member of Congress



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Rashida Tlaib  
Member of Congress



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Nydia M. Velázquez  
Member of Congress

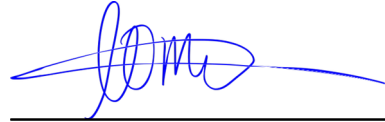
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<sup>3</sup> See Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing, *supra* note 2 (explaining that “[t]his rule proposes to retain much of the 2015 AFFH Rule’s core planning process, with certain improvements such as a more robust community engagement requirement, a streamlined required analysis, greater transparency, and an increased emphasis on goal setting and measuring progress. It also includes mechanisms to hold program participants accountable for achieving positive fair housing outcomes and complying with their obligation to affirmatively further fair housing, modeled after those processes under other Federal civil rights statutes that apply to recipients of Federal financial assistance.”).



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Summer Lee  
Member of Congress



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Ilhan Omar  
Member of Congress



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Barbara Lee  
Member of Congress



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Greg Casar  
Member of Congress



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Yvette D. Clarke  
Member of Congress



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Delia C. Ramirez  
Member of Congress



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Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.  
Member of Congress



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Adam B. Schiff  
Member of Congress



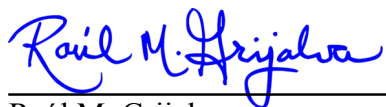
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Bonnie Watson Coleman  
Member of Congress



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Kevin Mullin  
Member of Congress



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Raúl M. Grijalva  
Member of Congress



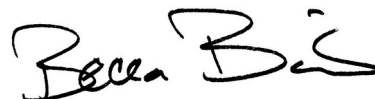
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Dwight Evans  
Member of Congress



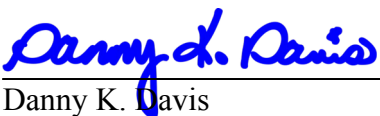
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Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez  
Member of Congress



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Becca Balint  
Member of Congress



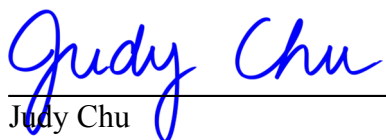
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Danny K. Davis  
Member of Congress



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Melanie Stansbury  
Member of Congress



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Judy Chu  
Member of Congress



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Ted W. Lieu  
Member of Congress



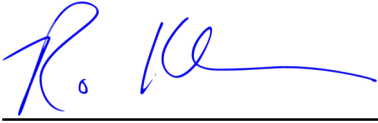
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Scott H. Peters  
Member of Congress



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Dan Goldman  
Member of Congress



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Ro Khanna  
Member of Congress



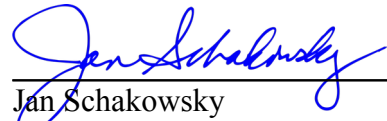
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Jamaal Bowman, Ed.D.  
Member of Congress



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Maxwell Alejandro Frost  
Member of Congress



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Jan Schakowsky  
Member of Congress