

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 19, 2018

The Honorable Susan Collins, Chairman
The Honorable Jack Reed, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and
Urban Development, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Collins and Ranking Member Reed,

American families are significantly impacted by where they live. Where a family lives impacts their access to critical public services like health care and transportation, and can influence whether their children will have the opportunity to achieve in school, and to what extent a family will be able to benefit from public investments in their communities. It is incumbent upon all of us as members of the United States Senate to do all that we can to ensure that Americans have a real shot at housing opportunities of their choosing and to support the work of private fair housing organizations to address housing and lending discrimination across our great nation. As the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee works toward appropriating funds for Fiscal Year 2019, we urge your support for level funding of \$45 million for the Fair Housing Initiatives Program (FHIP).

FHIP is the only federal program that supports the work of qualified nonprofit fair housing organizations' throughout the nation to educate the public and housing industry professionals, and address housing discrimination. Using FHIP's Education and Outreach Initiatives (EOI) grant, FHIP grantees empower their communities to recognize discrimination by educating the public about their rights to housing choice free from discrimination. FHIP grantees also provide critical and relied-upon training to local housing providers, including real estate professionals, rental and leasing companies, and lenders about how to comply with the Fair Housing Act. Nonprofit organizations funded by Private Enforcement Initiative (PEI) grants are also the first line of contact for Americans who believe they have experienced housing discrimination. These groups investigate initial complaints of housing discrimination and investigate housing sites to determine the extent of any discrimination that may be occurring and assist individuals through the complaint process when there is evidence of discrimination.

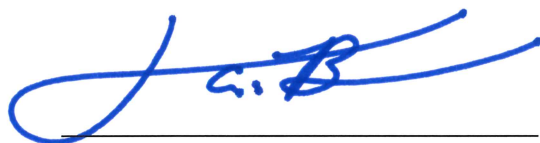
FHIP is a small but highly effective program. HUD has recognized that cases referred by FHIP agencies are twice as likely to result in a settlement or charges of a violation, resulting in the opening of countless units of housing for every complaint of discrimination they receive from FHIP groups. Through early research and testing, FHIP enforcement grant recipients ensure that

only instances of real housing discrimination are brought to HUD, local or state civil rights agencies that assist HUD, and the various court systems.

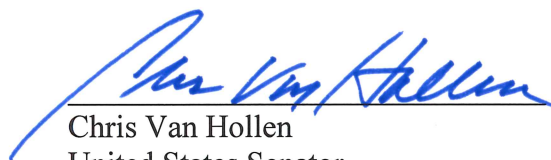
In FY 2017, HUD awarded FHIP grants to 150 nonprofit fair housing organizations that competed for the funds, supporting fair housing education and enforcement in 44 states and the District of Columbia. Unfortunately, existing resources do not come close to addressing the 4 million estimated annual incidents of housing discrimination that occur in our nation, especially in states that do not have a full-service nonprofit fair housing organization for the public to go to. Given the demonstrated need to address housing discrimination and the value that the FHIP program provides, we urge the Subcommittee to provide \$45 million in funding for FHIP in FY 2019.

We must do all we can to maintain support for FHIP and continue to take on the important work of eliminating housing discrimination and maintaining housing opportunities available to every American. Thank you for your consideration of this request and your support of efforts to end housing discrimination.

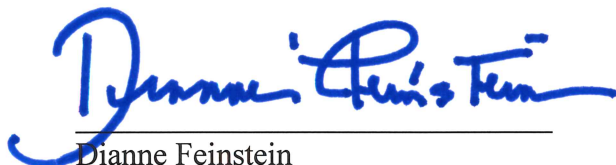
Sincerely,



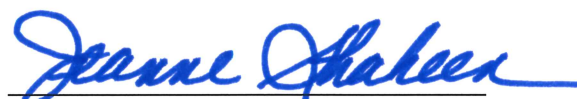
Cory A. Booker
United States Senator



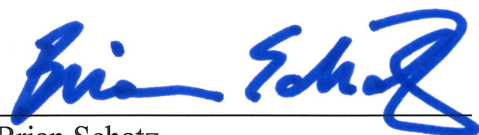
Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator



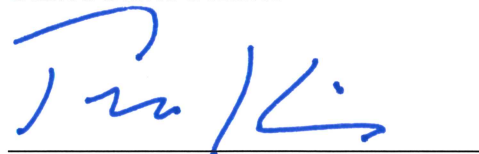
Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator



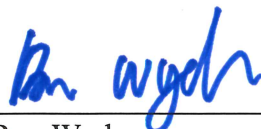
Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator



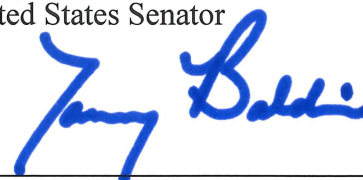
Brian Schatz
United States Senator



Tim Kaine
United States Senator



Ron Wyden
United States Senator



Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator

Kirsten Gillibrand

Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator

Tammy Duckworth

Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator

Ben Cardin

Benjamin L. Cardin
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Sherrod Brown

Sherrod Brown
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Richard Blumenthal

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Maria Cantwell
United States Senator

Kamala Harris

Kamala Harris
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Maggie Hassan

Margaret Wood Hassan
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Chris Coons

Christopher A. Coons
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Catherine Cortez Masto

Catherine Cortez Masto
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Debbie Stabenow

Debbie Stabenow
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Bernard Sanders

Bernard Sanders
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Mazie Hirono

Mazie Hirono
United States Senator