



House Bill 90 – State and Local Housing Programs – Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing

Position: Support

On behalf of Maryland REALTORS® and our 28,000+ members, we support HB 90, which requires the Department of Housing and Community Development to provide reports to the General Assembly and the Governor on efforts to administer programs that affirmatively further fair housing and prohibit the Department from taking any action that is inconsistent with affirmatively furthering fair housing.

As you know, HUD recently replaced the 2015 Rule to *Affirmatively Further Fair Housing* with a new, weaker rule called *Preserving Community and Neighborhood Choice* which is designed to still ensure that housing is *affordable, safe, decent, free of unlawful discrimination, and accessible under civil rights laws*.

Maryland REALTORS® believes HB 90 creates the necessary reporting mechanism to ensure a greater commitment to the Fair Housing Act, as intended, with *the 2015 Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing Rule in place*.

The National Association of REALTORS® 2020 President Vince Malta shared in a statement its [our] disappointment that HUD had taken steps which significantly weakened the federal government's commitment to the goals of the Fair Housing Act. NAR went on to say the viability of our 1.4 million members depends on the free, transparent, and efficient transfer of property in this country, and NAR maintains that a strong, affirmative fair housing rule is vital to advancing our nation's progress toward thriving and inclusive communities. With the pandemic's disproportionate impact on people of color reminding us of the costs of the failure to address barriers to housing opportunity, NAR remains committed to ensuring no American is unfairly denied this fundamental right in the future.

Maryland REALTORS® respectfully urges a favorable report of HB 90.

For more information, please contact bill.castelli@mdrealtor.org or susan.mitchell@mdrealtor.org or lisa.may@mdrealtor.org