



L. BROOKS PATTERSON, OAKLAND COUNTY EXECUTIVE

C O U N T Y M I C H I G A N
 D E P A R T M E N T O F E C O N O M I C
 D E V E L O P M E N T & C O M M U N I T Y A F F A I R S

COMMUNITY & HOME IMPROVEMENT DIVISION
 Karry L. Rieth, Manager

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CITY OF TROY
 CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE

March 3, 2006

Dear Community & Home Improvement Friend:

Every person in Oakland County has an equal right to choose housing suited to his/her needs and financial ability. In support of this precept, Oakland County Executive L. Brooks Patterson has declared April as "Fair Housing Month" in Oakland County. This year's national theme is "Fair Housing, it's not an option - it's the law".

This is the 38th anniversary of the National Fair Housing Law, Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968. This law, together with the Fair Housing Amendments Act of 1988 and State of Michigan legislation, prohibits housing discrimination in the sale, rental, financing and advertising of housing and calls for equal opportunity for all citizens regardless of race, color, sex, national origin, age, marital status, religion, disability or family status.

Fair housing goals are a part of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG), Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA), and HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME) programs. Communities receiving these funds have local responsibilities to affirmatively further fair housing. The following are a few suggested actions which local communities can undertake to further equal housing opportunities.

1. Issue a fair housing policy statement adopted locally to help establish broad support for, and understanding of, fair housing laws by housing providers, home seekers and the general public.
2. Introduce a proclamation and/or resolution concerning fair housing before your governing body or a committee of the governing body.
3. Pass a fair housing ordinance equivalent to existing Federal and State laws.
4. Develop a local public awareness campaign to help educate citizens of their rights under the Fair Housing laws and where they can call for assistance.
5. Urge people who believe they've been harmed by housing discrimination to file complaints with HUD by calling 1-800-669-9777, TDD 1-800-927-9275 or on the internet at www.hud.gov/discrim.html.

6. Undertake actions to assure that land use and development programs funded under CDBG provide greater housing opportunities throughout the community development area for identifiable segments of the total group of lower-income persons in the community.
7. Allocate funds to an organization providing a housing discrimination complaint service and other special programs designed to meet the needs of people protected by the provisions of the fair housing law.
8. Develop marketing goals and advertising procedures to insure the participation of protected group individuals in local housing programs.
9. Secure the voluntary cooperation of real estate firms, developers, appraisers, apartment complex owners, banking and financial institutions, or others in the housing service field in taking affirmative steps to further fair housing for lower income homeowners/renters and expand housing opportunities for all persons.

The Fair Housing Center of Metropolitan Detroit and the Oakland County Housing Counselor provide fair housing information to housing consumers and housing providers. Local communities may wish to utilize the service of the housing counselor and/or contract with the Fair Housing Center for additional fair housing services.

While the designation of "Fair Housing Month" occurs in April, continuing observance of the national fair housing laws should be a year-long goal for everyone. If Community & Home Improvement Division staff can provide technical assistance or answer any questions you may have, please call me at (248) 858-0493.

Sincerely,



Karry L. Rieth
Manager

KR/jhb

COUNTY EXECUTIVE DECLARATION

L. Brooks Patterson

Issues This Special Proclamation Declaring

The Month of April, 2006

as

Fair Housing Month

“Fair Housing, It’s not an Option – It’s the Law”

WHEREAS April has been declared as Fair Housing Month in recognition of the 38th anniversary of the signing of the Federal Fair Housing Act; and

WHEREAS this landmark law along with other federal and state legislation strictly prohibits housing discrimination on the basis of sex, color, race, age, religion, national origin, disability, family or marital status; and

WHEREAS Fair Housing Month is designed to heighten people’s awareness of their rights under the law when pursuing the purchase or rental of housing; and

WHEREAS all citizens are entitled to freedom of choice in the selection of housing and are guaranteed certain protections under the law if they are victims of discrimination.

NOW THEREFORE LET IT BE KNOWN that I, L. Brooks Patterson, Oakland County Executive, do hereby authorize the issuance of this special proclamation which declares April 2006 as Fair Housing Month.



L. Brooks Patterson
Oakland County Executive