

Eastern Regional Office of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights

July 5, 2011

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**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA STATE ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO ISSUE REPORT
ON AFFIRMATIVELY FURTHERING FAIR HOUSING IN THE DISTRICT**

What: Press Conference

Who: District of Columbia State Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights

When: Thursday, July 14, 2011 10:00 a.m.

Where: Eastern Regional Office, 624 9th St. NW, Washington DC 20425

WASHINGTON, DC – The District of Columbia State Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights will release its report, “Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing in the District of Columbia,” at a press conference at the Eastern Regional Office in Washington D.C. Commissioner Roberta Achtenberg, former Assistant Secretary for Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity at the Department of Housing and Urban Development, will participate in the press conference. The report concludes that while the District has a strong program to process fair housing complaints and has a number of education and outreach events to increase knowledge of fair housing rights it falls short in melding these activities into a program designed to achieve results.

Background: In order to receive federal housing funds, the District is required to affirmatively further fair housing. Every five years it prepares an “Analysis of Impediments” to Fair Housing Choice in the District of Columbia. The DC State Advisory Committee held a public briefing to hear from government officials, local and national fair housing organizations, and fair housing and fair lending advocates about the District’s efforts to affirmatively further fair housing.

The Committee recommends that the District implement more proactive measures to affirmatively further fair housing. Specifically, the DC State Advisory Committee recommends the District conduct paired-testing investigations to determine fair housing compliance in rentals, sales, mortgage lending and insurance; strengthen coordination and oversight of all city agencies that have an impact on fair housing; and more actively monitor the housing challenges confronting persons with disabilities. “Based on my experience at HUD, and speaking personally, I commend the Advisory Committee’s call for a more aggressive approach. More testing of housing providers is one critical step needed to identify and then respond to persistent discrimination in the local housing market,” said Commissioner Achtenberg.

The Committee also recommends extensive testing of potential Section 8 landlords and a more effective education and outreach program for tenants. The program can inform eligible tenants about available

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This report is the work of the DC State Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights. The report, which may rely on studies and data generated by third parties, is not subject to an independent review by Commission staff. The views expressed in this report and the findings and recommendations contained herein are those of a majority of the State Advisory Committee members and do not necessarily represent the views of the Commission or its individual members, nor do they represent the policies of the U.S. government.

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Section 8 housing in neighborhoods throughout the city. In addition, the District needs to establish a baseline of current Section 8 voucher use in city neighborhoods in order to measure the progress of its improved program efforts.

Copies of the report will be available at the press conference.