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Housing and Community Development Network of New Jersey

Policy Bulletin

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Policy Priorities Signed into Law; Trump Suspends Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing Rule

In the final days of the 2016-2017 Legislative Session, the following Network policy priorities were signed into law:

- **"New Jersey Housing Assistance for Veterans Act"** Establishes a pilot program to assist low income or disabled veterans with housing modification and rehabilitation; appropriates $5 million over a five year period.
- **Emergency Assistance:** Individuals or families that are homeless or in temporary living arrangement due to domestic violence will be eligible for emergency assistance.

Unfortunately, Governor Christie *did not* take action on the following priorities resulting in a pocket veto:

- "**Clawback bill**" Establishes process for recovery of Superstorm Sandy aid overpayments.
- **50 percent reduction in sewer and water connection fees for affordable homes.** The bill expands to all affordable homes (including those built by for-profit developers) the 50 percent reduction in new connection fees and the credit against the connection fee for affordable homes previously connected to the sewer and water system that were demolished or refurbished.
- **Allows individual to receive additional lifetime emergency assistance under certain circumstances.** This bill would require that the Commissioner of Human Services nullify any months of emergency assistance that were received by an individual more than 84 months (seven years) prior to an application for emergency assistance.

Congratulations to our members and partners for all your tireless to try to make these priorities law! Together, we have worked hard this last legislative session to protect the resources that strengthen our neighborhoods and promote the policies that improve quality of life for our fellow New Jerseyans. We look forward to continuing that work and hopefully celebrate success in this new session!

Trump Rolls Back Key Fair Housing Rule

On January 5th, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Secretary **Ben Carson announced** that HUD will suspend the requirement that communities comply with the Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing rule until well after 2020.

The rule was put in place two years ago by the Obama Administration after decades of delay. Secured by the Civil Rights Movement, it was designed to ensure the effective enforcement of

the federal Fair Housing Act to undo racial segregation. As we celebrate Martin Luther King Jr. Day, this delay marks the Trump Administration's alarming step back from that effort.

HUD's notice does not repeal the **Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing** (AFFH) rule, but it does cut off and delay federal enforcement, which could effectively kill AFFH. Secretary Carson's announcement last week includes the following:

- Extends more than 1,000 jurisdictions deadlines for submitting an Assessment of Fair Housing (AFH) until after October 31, 2020.
- Discontinues HUD's review of any Assessment of Fair Housing (AFH)s currently under review, AND will not render an accept, deemed accepted, or non-accept determination for submitted AFHs.
- Allows program participants that previously received a non-accept decision from HUD on their AFH submission to not submit revised AFHs until after October 2020.
- Notifies program participants preparing to submit their first AFH that they should not submit an AFH to HUD.

The Network will continue to fight against segregation and economic inequality in our communities and discrimination in housing and we will fight to affirmatively further fair housing in New Jersey.

Housing and Community Development Network of New Jersey
609-393-3752 | info@hcdnnj.org | www.hcdnnj.org

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