

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

April 5, 2004

Honorable Alphonso Jackson, Acting Secretary
United States Department of
Housing and Urban Development
451- 7th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20410

Dear Secretary Jackson:

It has come to our attention that an application to establish a fair housing center in New York City was deemed ineligible due to a new eligibility requirement that HUD imposed for applicants in the 2003 SuperNOFA process. We are writing to ask that you reconsider this application submitted by the National Fair Housing Alliance and evaluate whether the newly imposed eligibility requirement was in fact properly imposed.

As you know, the Fair Housing Organizations Initiative (FHOI) under HUD's Fair Housing Initiatives Program funds non-profit sponsoring organizations to create fair housing centers. In 2003, for the first time in the history of FHOI, HUD made ineligible any organization that had received such funding in the past two years. The National Fair Housing Alliance, the only national organization entirely devoted to ending housing discrimination, has successfully started seven fair housing centers in the past eight years, and is in the process of establishing another. It is the only organization in the country with the capacity to create new centers for consecutive years in a row.

It is because of this change to the NOFA that the National Fair Housing Alliance's application to establish a center in New York City was made ineligible for funding. Eleven institutions and individuals, including Freddie Mac, Columbia University, the National Council of La Raza, Asian Americans for Equality, the Bronx Independent Living Center, and others, made firm commitments of support in kind and in funding totaling \$150,000 for the establishment of a new fair housing center. The National Fair Housing Alliance was to act as the sponsoring organization for the new center.

Our constituents in New York City currently have no access to a full-service fair housing center. We believe this is a real disservice millions of these people. New York City's households are one-fifth Hispanic, one-fifth African American, and over seven percent Asian. In addition, twenty-five percent of the City's population is disabled. In addition, according to the 2000 Census, New York City is one of the top five most segregated cities in America.

We know you share my concern that greater New York City is without a full service fair housing presence. We look forward to your support in reviewing this situation and eliminating HUD's NOFA newly imposed eligibility requirement concerning funding applications in consecutive years.

Thank you for your consideration and prompt response.

Sincerely,

Carolyn B. Maloney

Tom

Joe Eszran

Charles Rangel

Eric L. Engal

Mary Baker

August W. Muto

John
