



**For Immediate Release**

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Contact: Deidre Swesnik  
(202) 898-1661, [dswesnik@nationalfairhousing.org](mailto:dswesnik@nationalfairhousing.org)

**Fair Housing Organizations Drive National Efforts for Housing Integration**  
*National Fair Housing Alliance Highlights Efforts by Private Groups to Create Diverse, Inclusive Communities Nationwide*

WASHINGTON, DC – Today, the National Fair Housing Alliance (NFHA) reported that private non-profit fair housing organizations are making significant inroads to eliminating discrimination around the country. “The Big Picture: How Fair Housing Organizations Challenge Systemic and Institutionalized Discrimination,” NFHA’s 2011 Fair Housing Trends Report, highlights the work that private groups do to promote diverse, inclusive communities. Annual data on fair housing complaints show that 85 private non-profit fair housing organizations, operating on shoestring budgets, investigated almost twice as many complaints as all government agencies combined tasked with enforcing the federal Fair Housing Act.

“It is hard to see any part of society left untouched by the foreclosure crisis,” said NFHA President and CEO Shanna L. Smith. “Fortunately, private, non-profit fair housing organizations are stepping up to fight the negative effects of the crisis. Moreover, these groups are broadening their efforts to rid the nation of intractable segregation by addressing systemic barriers to housing integration.”

According to the report, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) have taken some significant steps over the past year to address injustice in the housing market. HUD has improved its staffing, training and case investigation work, thereby beginning to put the tools in place for productive fair housing enforcement. DOJ is continuing to fulfill its pledge to intensify its fair housing work by undertaking some of its largest cases ever.

However, in spite of these advances, long-recognized deficiencies in fair housing enforcement remain unaddressed, including HUD’s inherent conflict of interest between enforcing the law and maintaining partnerships with local jurisdictions that receive HUD funding, lenders, builders, real estate companies and others in the housing industry that may be in violation of the Fair Housing Act. In addition, a backlog of fair housing complaints continues to exist at the federal, state and local levels while private organizations struggle to stay afloat due to inadequate federal funding. Private organizations investigated 18,665 complaints while federal, state, and local agencies combined processed 10,186.

“Census 2010 data show that our country remains highly segregated,” continued Smith. “As the nation continues to reel from the foreclosure and economic crises, private non-profit fair housing organizations are

taking stock of their communities. They are evaluating what went right, what went wrong, and what needs to happen next. We call on HUD and DOJ to step up their enforcement work and policy initiatives to do the same.”

Under federal Fair Housing Act it is illegal to discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, gender, disability, or familial status in rental housing, real estate sales, lending, insurance, and any financial or other services related to housing.

To read NFHA’s 2011 Trends Report, go to [www.nationalfairhousing.org](http://www.nationalfairhousing.org).

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**About the National Fair Housing Alliance ([www.nationalfairhousing.org](http://www.nationalfairhousing.org))**

Founded in 1988, the National Fair Housing Alliance is a consortium of more than 220 private, non-profit fair housing organizations, state and local civil rights agencies, and individuals from throughout the United States. Headquartered in Washington, D.C., the National Fair Housing Alliance, through comprehensive education, advocacy and enforcement programs, provides equal access to apartments, houses, mortgage loans and insurance policies for all residents of the nation.