



# FAIR HOUSING NEWS

A newsletter about fair housing, community development, & neighborhood quality of life

## SPRING GREETINGS!!!

**Welcome To This Edition Of *Fair Housing News*,  
Produced By The GBCHRB As A Public Service!**

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## IN THE NATIONAL NEWS

### **Owners Of Several Apartment Buildings In Suburban Philadelphia Charged With Discriminating Against Families With Children Via Newspaper Ads.**

HUD charged the couple with illegally terminating the lease of a single mother because she adopted an 11-year old child. The Department alleges that the owners made discriminatory statements indicating that they did not rent to families with children and they discouraged other families from applying for available rental units by understating the number of bedrooms. According to HUD's charge, when a single woman viewed an apartment and mentioned that she intended to adopt a child, the owner told her that she had never before rented to a family with children. After the woman moved into the unit and adopted her son, the owners notified her that they were terminating her lease. The family was forced to move to a new town. The charge further alleges that the owner had previously advertised the three-bedroom apartment as having two-bedrooms to avoid inquiries from families with children. [Read the April 15, 2010 HUD Press Release.](#)

### **Justice Department Signs Agreement with St. Clair County, Illinois, to Ensure Civic Access for People with Disabilities.**

The Justice Department just announced an agreement with St. Clair County, Illinois, to improve access to all aspects of civic life for persons with disabilities. The agreement was reached under Project Civic Access (PCA), the Justice Department's wide-ranging initiative to ensure that cities, towns, and counties across the country comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The agreement was reached under title II of the ADA, which prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities by state and local governments. Expect more of such actions to follow. [Read the May 11, 2010 DOJ Press Release.](#)



**HUD Charges Two Poughkeepsie, New York Landlords With Violating The Fair Housing Act For Refusing To Allow A Vietnam-Era Veteran Suffering From Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder To Have A Therapeutic Service Dog In His Apartment.** [HUD's charge](#) states that the landlords,

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who manage and own the Apartment Buildings of South Street Builders, Inc., in Highland, NY, retaliated against the veteran by threatening to evict him because he filed a housing discrimination complaint. In his complaint, filed with HUD and the New York State Division of Human Rights, the resident said the owners refused his request for a reasonable accommodation when they refused his use of a service animal his doctors had prescribed to reduce his post-traumatic stress, depression, and seizures. Although one of the owners acknowledged that he had heard of assistance animals being used to treat these disorders, the landlords denied the tenant's requests for a therapeutic service dog because his apartment building had a "no-pets" policy. HUD's charge also said the landlords then told the tenant that he would need to start looking for another place to live because he had filed a complaint. [Read the March 4, 2010 HUD Press Release.](#)



**Federal Sentencing Guidelines Amended to Include Gender Identity.** For the first time, the U.S. Sentencing Commission just adopted [changes to the federal sentencing guidelines](#) to permit crimes in which the victim is intentionally selected on the basis of gender identity to be eligible for sentencing enhancements. The federal sentencing guidelines are rules that set out a uniform policy for sentencing people convicted of felonies and Class A misdemeanors in federal courts. The new rule will apply to every federal crime and will conform guidelines with the [Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act](#), authorizing the federal government to investigate and prosecute bias-motivated crimes based on the victim's race, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, or disability. The Commission submitted the changes to Congress; they will go into law November 1st unless Congress acts otherwise.

**HUD Announced Settlements With Two Texas Landlords For Failing To Warn Their Tenants That Their Homes May Contain Potentially Dangerous Lead Paint.** The San Antonio property owners have agreed to make 15 properties containing 33 total units lead safe. In addition to doing \$84,000 in lead paint hazard remediation work, the landlords agreed to pay \$6,000 in civil penalties and \$20,000 in Child Health Improvement Projects. According to HUD, UC Rental Management and its president violated the federal Residential Lead-Based Paint Hazard Reduction Act and the Lead Disclosure Rule, by failing to inform tenants that their pre-1978 homes may contain potentially dangerous levels of lead. [Read the May 10, 2010 HUD Press Release.](#)



**Justice Department Resolves Housing Discrimination Lawsuit with Scranton, Pennsylvania, Apartment Complex.** Under the terms of the consent decree, filed in federal court in Scranton, Pennsylvania, the defendants, Normandy Holdings LLC, Lofts at the Mill LP and Lofts GP LLC, are required to pay \$35,000 in monetary relief to two victims of discrimination and to the United States. The department's complaint, which originated from an investigation by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), alleged that the owners, property managers, and management company for "The Mill" luxury apartments violated the Fair Housing Act by refusing to rent apartments to persons with children and by advertising discriminatory, "21 years or older," tenant policies in multiple Scranton newspapers. [Read the March 18, 2010 DOJ Press Release.](#)



**Man Indicted for Civil Rights Conspiracy in Connection with Cross-Burning in Athens, Louisiana.** Joshua James Moro, 23, was indicted by a federal grand jury for participating in a civil rights conspiracy in a 2008 cross-burning in Athens, La., near the home of an interracial couple. Moro was arrested today following the return of the indictment on April 28, 2010. Moro was charged with one count of

conspiring to interfere with another person's civil rights. If convicted, he faces a maximum punishment of 10 years in prison. Moro's co-conspirator and cousin, Daniel Earl Danforth, was convicted this past January for conspiring to burn a cross, using fire to commit a federal felony and obstruction of justice charges stemming from this same cross-burning. According to the trial evidence, Moro agreed to help Danforth build, erect, and burn a cross near the homes of their cousin, who lived with an African-American man and an 11-year-old son, and other relatives believed to approve of the interracial relationship. Moro agreed to get diesel fuel for Danforth to use to burn the cross. Danforth and others built a cross out of pine trees and transported the cross adjacent to the victims' homes, where they set it on fire in order to intimidate the interracial couple. [Read the May 12, 2010 DOJ News Release.](#)

## RECENT CENSUS DATA & NEWS



**New Census Figures Indicate America's Foreign-Born Population Are Changing Racial & [Immigration](#) Self-Identification.** What it means to be African-American, for example, may be redefined by the large number of blacks (almost 10%) born abroad, according to the just-released [Census report](#). It found that Africa now accounts for 33% of foreign-born blacks in the USA, highest ever. More than 1 in 50 Americans now identify themselves as "multiracial." The pattern of race reporting for foreign-born Americans is very different than for native-born Americans. Foreign born are more likely to list their nation of origin when identifying race or ethnicity - e.g., 87% of Americans born in Cuba and 53% born in Mexico identified themselves as white, a majority born in the Dominican Republic and El Salvador, newer immigrants, self-described as neither black nor white.



**The Number of 5-Year-Olds And Older Who Spoke A Language Other Than English At Home Over Doubled In 30 Years - Four Times Greater Than The Nation's Population Growth, According To the Census.** Using data from the 2007 American Community Survey and over 1980 - 2007, the Census found non-English languages grew by 140% while the nation's overall population grew 34%. Spanish speakers accounted for the largest numeric increase, 23.4 million more in 2007 than 1980, a 211% jump. The Vietnamese-speaking population accounted for the largest percentage increase of 511% (1.0 million speakers). The new report, [Language Use in the United States: 2007](#) [PDF], identifies the states with the highest concentrations of some of the most commonly spoken non-English languages. The languages, and some of the states with the highest percentage of speakers: Spanish (Texas, California, and New Mexico), French (Louisiana and Maine), German (North Dakota and South Dakota), Slavic languages (Illinois, New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut), Chinese (California, New York, Hawaii, and Massachusetts), and Korean (Hawaii, California, and New Jersey). [Read the April 27, 2010 Press Release.](#)

**Report Finds Shift Toward Extended Families.** Multigenerational families, which were 25% of the population in 1940 but 12% by 1980, slightly increased to 16% in 2008, according to the Census. The analysis found that the proportion of people 65 and older who live alone, which was rising for many years - from 6% in 1900 to 29% in 1990 - declined to 27%. The share of older people living in multigenerational families, which fell to 17% in 1980 from 57% in 1900, rose to 20%. Some influential factors are delayed marriage, immigration and recession-induced job losses and foreclosures that have forced people to double-up under one roof, according to the [analysis of Census](#)

[Bureau figures](#). The shift appears to have been accelerated by the recession. In 2008, at the beginning of the recession and the latest year for which figures are available, 2.6 million more Americans lived in a multigenerational household than did the year before. As a result of job losses and foreclosures that have affected young adults, a majority of multigenerational households including a family member over 65 are headed by that person. The growth of extended families has also helped by another phenomenon: the average single-family home size is twice compared to decades ago. The shift to extended families was more among blacks and Asian- and Hispanic-Americans than non-Hispanic whites. While the share of 65-to-84-year-olds living alone began to decline, as Americans lived longer and healthier, the proportion of those 85 and older living alone increased to 39% in 2008 from 22% in 1970. [Read the March 18, 2010 New York Times Article.](#)

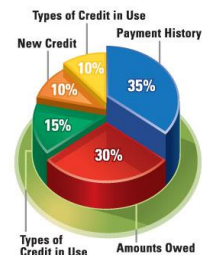


## MORTGAGE LENDING NEWS

**Responding to Regulatory Crackdown, "Free" Reports on Credit End at Experian's <http://www.freecreditreport.com/>.** Experian, the credit data company, has begun charging \$1 for the report and then giving that money to charity. The company paid \$1.25 million in 2005 and 2007 to settle two sets of charges from the Federal Trade Commission that it was misleading consumers seeking the free credit reports. A free report is available at [annualcreditreport.com](http://annualcreditreport.com), where individuals can get one free report each year. The [new F.T.C. rules](#) went into effect on April 2, and they required sites to include a prominent notice across the top of each Web page that mentioned free reports declaring that the only authorized source under federal law for such reports is [annualcreditreport.com](http://annualcreditreport.com). [Read the April 7, 2010 New York Times Article.](#)

**Loan Modifications Slowly Proceed, With Questionable Success.** The [Treasury Department](#) released figures for the [Home Affordable Modification Program](#) (HAMP) through April of this year. The numbers show that roughly 300,000 borrowers have received a permanent modification under the program. But that is only a small fraction of the estimated four million households in danger of foreclosure and of the 1.7 million households that the governments thinks would qualify for the program. The number of borrowers that enrolled in the trial phrase in April was only about a third of the number that signed up in September. According to the *Times*, There are several possible reasons for the scarcity in applicants: "Some borrowers may feel it is more financially advantageous to default, pay nothing for many months and then walk away from the house. Others may have committed fraud when getting their [mortgage](#) and are reluctant to come forward. And many may simply be unaware of the program." Meanwhile, foreclosure filings continue at a rate above 300,000 for the 14th straight month, according to [Realty Trac](#). [Read the May 18, 2010 New York Times Article.](#)

**Senate Votes to Require Credit Scores to be Provided.** The Senate, by a voice vote, approved a proposal by Senator Mark Udall (D-Colorado) to require that credit reports include the numerical score, which by usually ranges from 300 to 850. Obtaining a score from the major credit reporting bureaus that calculate them typically costs up to \$15.95 for each score. The proposal would require the score to be provided if it was used to deny credit, required a higher interest rate on a loan, or prevented an applicant from being hired for a job. The proposal was one of several amendments addressed in the [financial regulations](#) bill, which may be wrapped up by the end of May, 2010. [Read the May 18, 2010 New York Times Article.](#)







## FOCUS ON LATINO ISSUES

**Latino Integration Hampered by Obstacles & Inequalities, According to Study.** The study by the Population Reference Bureau and the National Council of La Raza, found that most Latino children were growing up in two-parent households with at least one working, that were poor or low-income and in socially and economically isolated neighborhoods. Worryingly for the future, the study found the third-generation had worse health and single-parent households than the previous Latino generations. In an interview, the study's co-author said that "poverty's legacy, discrimination, alienation, and a general feeling of 'not quite belonging' were to blame." [Read the Press Release.](#) [Read the April 27, 2010 New York Times article.](#)

**Gov. Jan Brewer Of Arizona Signed The Nation's Toughest Bill On Illegal Immigration Into Law On April 23rd.** Its aim is to identify, prosecute and deport illegal immigrants. The [law](#), which proponents and critics alike said was the broadest and strictest immigration measure in generations, would make the failure to carry immigration documents a crime and give the police broad power to detain anyone suspected of being in the country illegally. As hundreds of demonstrators massed, mostly peacefully, at the capitol plaza, the governor, speaking at a state building a few miles away, said the law "represents another tool for our state to use as we work to solve a crisis we did not create and the federal government has refused to fix." The law was to take effect 90 days after the legislative session ends, meaning by August. Court challenges were expected immediately.



## MARYLAND NEWS

**Attorney General Says Maryland Law Permits Recognition of Legal Marriages of Same-Gender Couples.** In an important step in the fight for marriage equality for same-gender couples, an opinion just released by the Office of Attorney General Doug Gansler states that marriages of same-gender couples legally entered into in other jurisdictions may and should be honored in Maryland. The Attorney General's opinion relies on longstanding legal precedent that says couples who have been legally married in another state are treated under Maryland law as married, even if that marriage could not be performed in the State of Maryland. Maryland follows New York State, which honors marriages between same-gender couples even though such marriages are not performed in that jurisdiction. Five states (Massachusetts, Connecticut, Iowa, Vermont, and New Hampshire) and the District of Columbia have passed laws allowing same-gender couples to marry. [Read the May 18, 2010 Maryland ACLU Newsletter.](#)



**Maryland's Prison Inmate Voting Law Draws Praise.** Many praised Maryland's new law requiring that prison inmates be counted at their home addresses when legislative districts are redrawn after the 2010 census. Counting inmates as residents (i.e., prison-based gerrymandering) inflates populations and exaggerates the power of the mainly rural districts where prisons usually are built. It undercuts the power of the urban districts where the inmates come from, their families live, and where they return after release.

With 1.4 million inmates nationally, the practice of drawing districts around prisons can easily shift a state's balance of legislative power. Most states have laws that prisons are not legitimate residences, and the practice persists because of "politics or inertia." According to a study by the Prison Policy Initiative, a research group, in some counties the phantom prison constituents make up as much 20% of the population. Since the Census does not ask for prisoners' home addresses, to get the right count, the state needs to use other available records. Maryland acted after learning how the prison count had distorted the political landscape: in one state district, nearly a fifth of the population are inmates, most of whom hail from elsewhere in the state. In one county commission district, inmates account for 64%. [Read the April 14, 2010 New York Times Article.](#)

**Bike to Work Day 2010, Sponsored by the Baltimore Metropolitan Council (BMC), is May 21st.** [Registration](#) is now open. This year is the 13th annual event, and features various morning rallies including: Anne Arundel Co/Annapolis - City Dock, Annapolis; Baltimore City - War Memorial Plaza at City Hall (100 N. Holliday St.); Baltimore County - Courthouse Square (400 Washington Ave, Towson); Carroll County - Westminster; Harford County - Government Center (220 S. Main St, Bel Air); and Howard County - The Mall in Columbia (by Sears Service Center, 10300 Little Patuxent Parkway, Columbia). Additional events will happen at universities and corporations. More info: [Bike Ped Beacon e-newsletter](#) or the BMC's [Facebook page](#). Register today for a free B2W 2010 T-shirt and commuter guide. All participants also receive an on-the-go snack and drink, and the chance to win prizes at the individual rally sites. [Register for Bike to Work Day 2010.](#)



## RESOURCES

**The NFHA National Housing Accessibility Fund Will Give Accessibility Grants to Disability Organizations.** As part of the settlement of *NFHA, et al. v. Spanos, et al.*, a fund was created to make modifications to apartments, single family homes, and other dwellings to increase accessibility for persons with disabilities. NFHA will not make direct grants to individuals or families, but provide funding to local advocacy organizations in some metros. Grants will be available through these organizations to individuals with disabilities or parents, or guardians of children with disabilities. The grant program will begin in summer, 2010 and go to 2014. The grant funds may be used to make modifications to a residential dwelling to make it accessible or habitable for persons with chemical or other environmental sensitivities. Local organizations will work with NFHA to develop the program guidelines and distribution system for the grants, and be responsible for informing the community about the availability of grant funds. More info about target metros, guidelines, and involved local advocacy organizations will soon on NFHA's website: <http://www.nationalfairhousing.org/>.

**The Baltimore Jewish Council Has a Great Website.** Aside from other things, it has an informative 5-Year Jewish Holiday Calendar: [Download the Calendar Here.](#) Check it out: <http://baltjc.org>.

**The American Bar Association's Center for Human Rights is a Rich Resource.** Human rights documents, resources, projects, links. One very interesting is the "Rule of Law" letters by the ABA president to national governments. The letters "express the Association's concerns about alleged intimidation, harassment, or abuse of lawyers,



judges, and human rights advocates. Each letter reflects the ABA's research and analysis of the facts and human rights law applicable to each case, and copies are sent to the U.S. Secretary of State and other relevant officials." (<http://www.abanet.org/humanrights/>)

**The Maryland State Bar Association's Website Has Useful Guides & Resources.** The info includes: [Sixty Plus Legal Program](#) - preparation of simple wills, advance directives, and deeds for seniors with low and moderate incomes, as well as the Medical Assistance Long Term Care Representation Program (improperly denied nursing home Medicaid coverage); [Assisted Living in Maryland](#) - a booklet to help individuals and families make good choices about assisted living facilities; [Disaster Plan](#) - legal guide for victims of disasters; [Fee Disputes](#) - a public service for clients who have a fee dispute with their attorney; [Lawyer Referral Services](#) - a listing of counties that provide lawyer referral services for those looking for an attorney; and [Legal Information Brochures](#).



**Interested in Fair Housing? Then You Need to Visit the GBCHR's YouTube Channel - <http://www.youtube.com/user/wkladky1>!** Also, Listen to a Fair Housing Radio Show - <http://www.gbchr.org/2rad9899.htm> - Click on any show, including foreclosure problems, Baltimore racial history, Fair Housing laws, disability issues, mortgage lending discrimination, & more.

**The GBCHR Distributes Free Fair Housing Brochures, Posters, and Guides.** [Contact us](#) for FREE Fair Housing info, brochures, & posters in English, Spanish, Korean, and Russian, as well as one specifically for people with disabilities.

January	February	March
April	May	June
July	August	September
October	November	December

## CALENDAR

**The Baltimore Jewish Council Holds Its Annual Meeting on May 27, 2010.** The Meeting features "The Politics of Prejudice in the Age of Obama," a discussion with Hannah Rosenthal, Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Anti-Semitism, U. S. Department of State. Registration required. For more info: 410-542-4850 or

[Ichandler@baltjc.org](mailto:Ichandler@baltjc.org).

### **U. S. Department of Justice to Hold Multi-Family Housing Access Forum.**

The Access Forum is intended "to assist developers, architects, and others understand the FHA's accessibility requirements, and to promote a dialogue between the developers of multi-family housing and persons with disabilities and their advocates." The Department's next Access Forum will be on June 8, 2010, at the Westin Copley Place Hotel in Boston, Massachusetts. [Read the Recent DOJ Article.](#)



[National Fair Housing Alliance Annual Meeting and Special Events - July 19, 2010 in New Orleans, Louisiana.](#)

[HUD FHEO 2010 National Fair Housing Policy Conference - July 19-23, 2010 in New Orleans, Louisiana.](#)



## REST IN PEACE

**Arnold Forster, Anti-Semitism Fighter With B'nai B'rith, 97.** With the Anti-Defamation League for nearly 60 years, Forster was general counsel from 1946 to 2003. He helped document, publicize, and combat myriad forms of anti-Semitism in the USA and overseas. He was widely quoted in the media on various Jewish issues, including Zionism, which he defended ardently and wrote frequently. His books, many of which began as League reports, include *The Trouble-Makers* (Doubleday, 1952), *Some of My Best Friends* (Farrar, Straus & Cudahy, 1962), and *The New Anti-Semitism* (McGraw-Hill, 1974), all co-written with Benjamin R. Epstein. Forster was also the author of a memoir, *Square One* (D. I. Fine, 1988), with a foreword by Elie Wiesel. In *Square One*, Forster recounted his long campaign against bigotry. The review in *The New York Times Book Review* concluded: "The work of Mr. Forster and the league over the years has contributed to eliminating many institutionalized forms of prejudice." She added, "We may not be back to 'Square One' in solving the problem, but this book is a reminder that there is still work to be done." [Read the March 26, 2010 New York Times Obituary.](#)

**Dorothy Height, Civil Rights Crusader, 98.** Height had an important career in civil rights of nearly 80 years, from anti-lynching protests in the early 1930s to 2009. Originally trained as a social worker, Height was president of the National Council of Negro Women from 1957 to 1997, overseeing various programs on voting rights, poverty, and AIDS. A longtime executive of the Y.W.C.A., she presided over the integration of its facilities in the 1940s. With Gloria Steinem, Shirley Chisholm, Betty Friedan, and others, she helped found the [National Women's Political Caucus](#) in 1971. She advised a number of American presidents on civil rights. The recipient of the Presidential Medal of Freedom and other awards, Height was given a place of honor on the dais when President Obama took the oath of office as the nation's 44th president. In a statement, he called Height "the godmother of the civil rights movement and a hero to so many Americans." [Read the April 20, 2010 New York Times Obituary.](#)



**The Rev. Benjamin L. Hooks, Civil Rights Leader, 85.** Rev. Hooks was executive director of the N. A. A. C. P. for fifteen years beginning in 1977. He early was involved in the civil rights movement, participating in sit-ins, boycotts and other demonstrations sponsored by the N.A.A.C.P. The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. recruited him to serve on the board of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, the driving wheel of the civil rights movement. President Richard M. Nixon appointed Hooks, a Nixon supporter, to the Federal Communications Commission in 1972. An ordained Baptist minister, Rev. Hooks was the resident minister at two churches in Detroit and Memphis. He insisted on preaching at some church - his own or someone else's - every Sunday, regardless of what job he held. "My life was built around being in those pulpits on Sunday," Mr. Hooks once said. In 2009, Rev. Hooks drew a long ovation at the N.A.A.C.P.'s 100th anniversary convention in New York, followed by a roar from the crowd when he proclaimed: "Let's fight on until justice runs down like waters and righteousness as a mighty stream," he said. "Let's fight on until there is no downsizing, until there is no glass ceiling. Let's fight on until God shall gather the four winds of heaven; until the angel shall plant one foot on the sea and the other on dry land and declare that the time that has been will be no more. Fight on, until the lion shall lie down with the lamb. Fight on, until justice, righteousness, hopes, equality and opportunity is the birthright of all Americans." Amen. [Read the April 15, 2010 New York Times Obituary.](#)