

Anne Arundel County Human Relations Commission Testimony HB392

The Fair Housing Act protects people from discrimination when they are renting or buying a home, getting a mortgage, seeking housing assistance, or engaging in other housing-related activities. Additional protections apply to federally-assisted housing.

The Anne Arundel Human Relations Commission enthusiastically endorses House Bill 392 - Evidence - Interception of Oral Communications - Fair Housing Testing. The Commission feels Maryland should join thirty nine states that allow one party consent taping of conversations:

Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Connecticut, District of Columbia, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.

Last year the Anne Arundel County Office of Equity And Human Rights partnered with Anne Arundel Community Development Services Inc, a non-profit corporation focused on affordable housing and community development and conducted Fair Housing testing. It is the Commission's belief that Delegate Bartlett's proposed legislation would enhance our ability to identify barriers to the provision of Fair Housing opportunities to County residents.

The proposed legislation would make it easier for Anne Arundel County to identify and address insidious practices like steering.

Steering involves guiding prospective home buyers or renters towards or away from certain neighborhoods based on race, religion or other characteristics.

This practice violates the individual's right to choose where they want to live and perpetuates segregated patterns of living.

In conclusion, the Anne Arundel Human Relations Commission strongly urges Committee members to give this proposed legislation a strong, positive vote and send it forward.

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