

February 18, 2021

The Honorable Senator Antonio Hayes  
James Senate Office Building, Room 222  
11 Bladen St., Annapolis, MD 21401

Reference: Support for House Bill 1095 (SB 781)

Dear Senator Hayes,

Please accept this letter of support for approval of HB 1095 (SB781) which proposes to remove the requirement for the buyer (s) names (s) to be included on a residential contract of sale in the State of Maryland.

A buyer (s) name (s) can reveal information about that person (s) including race, ethnicity, religion or national origin.

A buyer (s) name (s) can also be used to uncover more information about that person (s) including gender, sexual orientation, familial status, handicap or political affiliation.

- Pursuant to State Government Article, §20-702, Annotated Code of Maryland, it is the policy of the State of Maryland to provide for fair housing throughout the State, to all its citizens, regardless of race, color, religion, sex, familial status, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, or source of income.
- Pursuant to Code of Maryland 09.11.02.02 A, Relations to Client, it is the policy of the State of Maryland to direct real estate licensees to protect and promote the interests of the client which is of absolute fidelity to the client's interest and is primary.
- Pursuant to the National Association of Realtors Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice, 1.9, it is the obligation of Realtors to preserve confidential information about a client.

Removing the requirement for buyer (s) name (s) to be included in the residential contract of sale supports the State of Maryland policy and will serve to protect the public from making discriminatory decisions, implicit or otherwise, in housing, based on factors which are revealed in either a buyer (s) name (s) or factors which can be researched when a buyer (s) name (s) is revealed in the residential contract of sale.

In addition to supporting fair housing in Maryland, removing the requirement for buyer (s) names (s) to be included in the residential contract of sale will also allow Realtors to better protect the interests of their buyer clients in negotiating contracts of sale. Holding private the buyer (s) name (s), removes the opportunity for discrimination and also removes the opportunity to conduct research on the buyer (s) which can reveal information or factors which could compromise the buyer's (s') negotiating strategy.

Please help us further fair housing protections and the protection of our buying public privacy rights by supporting this important legislative initiative.

Sincerely,

*Kimberly Kepnes*

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