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February 26, 2020

The Honorable Al Green
U.S. House of Representatives
2347 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Green:

The 1.4 million members of the National Association of REALTORS® are pleased to support H.R. 149, the “Housing Fairness Act of 2020.” The bill promotes housing protections for persons of all backgrounds across the country when they engage in the range of real-estate-related transactions covered under the federal Fair Housing Act. The bill would amend federal legislation governing the operation of the Fair Housing Initiatives Program (FHIP), administered by HUD.

Private non-profit fair housing organizations were critical to the passage of the 1968 Federal Fair Housing Act and its effective implementation for over a half century. The paired testing that private fair housing groups conduct, along with their other enforcement activity, has been as critical as government enforcement in exposing unlawful housing discrimination and obtaining remedies for those who experience it. Paired testing is one of the most effective tools in ferreting out discrimination that might otherwise go unrecognized, as those who face discrimination are often unaware of the more favorable treatment received by persons of other background. The courts have long recognized the standing of fair housing groups and fair housing testers in seeking redress for the discrimination that testing investigations uncovers.

The National Association of REALTORS® supports the additional funding H.R. 149 provides for paired testing and private enforcement activities. NAR recognizes the importance of establishing and sustaining highly-qualified organizations to perform this work. NAR has long prohibited housing discrimination in its Code of Ethics. We support strong enforcement of the fair housing laws to hold everyone in the real estate industry accountable. This includes private enforcement by fair housing groups.

The goals of H.R. 149 are consistent with NAR’s ongoing emphasis on fair housing, as set forth in our ACT! plan which calls for greater accountability, culture change, and training among our industry. We are pleased to support this bill which promotes the interest of all our members.

Sincerely,



Vince Malta
2020 President, National Association of REALTORS®

