The Montgomery County Branch of the NAACP wishes to express its gratitude to the County Council and the County Executive for commemorating the enactment of the Fair Housing Law of 1968 and supporting current activities in furtherance of non-discriminatory access to housing.

We know that like many other places in the United States, governmental and private sector actors in Montgomery County have a long history of discriminatory practices, including discriminatory covenants, redlining, and racially-targeted steering. And while these practices have not operated legally for many years, their effect has led to racial and ethnic segregation in the current housing market.

Therefore, while we hope that nondiscrimination is embraced by those who offer and advertise housing in the rental and sales market, as well as those who provide mortgages and housing financing options. However, we know that hope alone is not enough. Therefore, we urge the county to engage in and fund efforts to assure appropriate enforcement of fair housing laws.

Further, we know that the theoretical underpinnings of non-discrimination in the housing market must include land use planning and new housing construction. Therefore, we urge the Council and the County Executive to ensure that future housing options are developed with a consideration of racial equity.

Finally, because a home is the most valuable asset held by most people, discrimination in housing has closed an avenue of wealth creation for many people and undermined their ability to fully participate in the American dream.

We thank the Council and the County Executive for issuing this proclamation and support efforts to assure access to safe and affordable housing without discrimination.