



The Fair Housing Justice Center (FHJC) condemns the murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Freddie Gray, Michael Brown, Jamar Clark, Sandra Bland, Tamir Rice and many others who have lost their lives through police violence. We stand in solidarity with all those around the world who protest for racial justice. We unequivocally believe that **BLACK LIVES MATTER**

The violent mistreatment of Black people by the police and their disproportionate number of deaths from the COVID-19 virus glaringly reflect the deeper structural and institutional racism that afflicts our society in all aspects of life. Across the board, Black and Brown communities are over-policed and under-served, with unequal access to quality health care, nutrition, schools, jobs, and public transportation. African American home seekers still face significant barriers when searching for housing. New York City — heralded as a progressive bastion — ranks as the nation's 3rd most residentially segregated area for African Americans and it has the most racially segregated school system in the nation.

NOW is the opportune moment for the City and State to take aggressive steps toward ending systemic racism — in the justice system, education and healthcare, and in housing and community development – to ensure that African Americans and all persons of color truly have the opportunity to live how and where they choose.

FHJC has specific proposals that should be implemented now to address racial injustices in housing:

• **Prohibit housing discrimination based on arrest and conviction records.**

These discriminatory practices have a disproportionate impact on African American families and perpetuate systemic racism and bias. The Governor, State legislators, the NYC Mayor & City Council must all be pressured to include this in police and justice reform and ban this practice ***right now***.

• **Build more affordable housing and locate it to reduce racial segregation.**

The NYC Mayor, in the wake of COVID-19, recently announced his intention to cut the capital budget for affordable housing by almost 40 percent. That's precisely the wrong thing to do. Instead, the City's investment in affordable housing should be increased to jump-start the local economy by providing jobs and much needed affordable housing.

It IS possible to reduce segregation, through placement of affordable housing in all areas and through other policies that affirmatively further fair housing, but it requires the will to do so and careful, diligent planning. In recent years, fair housing organizations have produced policy blueprints for the City and State on how to proceed. These proposals have too often been willfully ignored. Our government officials must take seriously their obligation to end segregation and discrimination in housing, once and for all.

• **Adequately fund fair housing testing and enforcement.**

One need only look at the investigations conducted and the *successful* legal cases brought by the FHJC and other groups to see what is sadly apparent — racial discrimination in the sale, rental, and financing of housing is still rampant. The only effective way to hold discriminating property owners, brokers, managers, and lenders accountable is through enforcement that utilizes undercover testing. The public funding currently devoted to enforcement is woefully inadequate. Fair housing laws must be vigorously enforced and funding for testing must be increased.

NOW IS THE TIME FOR BOLD AND SERIOUS ACTION FOR RACIAL JUSTICE, EQUITY, AND OPPORTUNITY.