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FAIR HOUSING CENTER OF CENTRAL INDIANA HONORS OUR NATION'S SERVICEMEMBERS THIS VETERANS' DAY

INDIANAPOLIS – This Veterans' Day, the Fair Housing Center of Central Indiana (FHCCI) honors our nation's servicemembers for the sacrifices they have made and joins them to increase awareness and enforce their rights to equal housing.

In Indianapolis, individuals with veteran status or a history of military service are protected from housing discrimination by local ordinance. This means that no housing provider may refuse to rent or sell a veteran or servicemember a home solely because of their military status, nor may they apply different terms and conditions to their housing versus a civilian tenant or resident, among other protections. The Servicemembers Civil Relief Act, a federal law, also provides housing protections to active duty military personnel, including prevention of foreclosure or eviction, in certain circumstances if that person's ability to pay his or her rent or mortgage has been directly impacted by their service. The Indiana Servicemembers Civil Relief Act was recently amended to protect veterans from employment discrimination. State and federal fair housing laws also provide protections for veterans with disabilities to ensure equal housing opportunity free from discrimination.

"The men and women who return home from fighting for our country have a right to equal housing opportunity," stated Amy Nelson, Executive Director of the FHCCI. "For veterans with disabilities, it is all too common that the housing options available are inaccessible."

The federal Fair Housing Act as amended requires multi-family housing constructed for first occupancy after March 13, 1991, to be fully accessible to individuals with physical disabilities. Doors must be wide enough to accommodate a person who uses a wheelchair and bathroom walls must be reinforced for an occupant who requires a grab bar, among other regulations. Persons with disabilities have the right to request accommodations or modifications to ensure equal enjoyment of their housing, regardless of the age of the property. These could include allowing a service or therapeutic animal in a no-pets building or granting a reserved parking spot for a veteran who cannot walk long distances.

The Fair Housing Center of Central Indiana (FHCCI) is a private, non-profit fair housing organization. Its mission is to ensure equal housing opportunities by eliminating housing discrimination through advocacy, enforcement, education and outreach. For more information on fair housing or enforcing fair housing rights as a veteran or servicemember, contact the FHCCI or visit www.fhcci.org.

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