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FHCCI COMMENDS CITY OF INDIANAPOLIS ON NEW HOUSING INITIATIVE

INDIANAPOLIS, IN – Today, the City of Indianapolis announced a new Tenant and Legal Assistance Initiative. The Fair Housing Center of Central Indiana (FHCCI) gives its full support to the City on this drastically needed housing effort.

The FHCCI hears far too often from tenants who are experiencing significant habitability problems, who fear or have experienced retaliation for trying to address those problems, those do not have adequate representation in court, those who struggle to find affordable or accessible housing for their families, or experience the harmful impacts of discrimination.

“I am incredibly proud of our city for taking this bold step forward by publicly showing its support,” stated Amy Nelson, Executive Director of the FHCCI. “I also appreciate Mayor Hogsett’s comments that this is the start of a broader conversation about housing needs. Thank you to the City for being a state leader in this arena.”

The FHCCI believes that our housing crisis is not just Indianapolis’ problem alone, but also about Indiana’s housing problems. It’s our hope this Indianapolis effort will spread statewide. It is the FHCCI’s position that for too many years laws have been passed that have exclusively favored landlords in our state. The result is the rights between tenants and landlords is no longer balanced. Tenants are at a severe disadvantage in addressing gaps, problems, or concerns. To that end, we need to:

- Work to amend state laws to provide more parity between tenants and landlords;
- Address the concerns raised nationally and locally about how evictions far too often occur against women of color or those with children;
- Repeal [SB 558](#) which limited cities from passing inclusionary zoning laws to address affordable housing needs;
- Understand the long-term impact when the simple filing of an eviction, no matter justified or not, will forever impact that person’s housing options due to today’s tenant screening processes;
- Ensure that new multi-family housing units meet [fair housing accessibility requirements](#);
- Advocate for passage of [visitability requirements](#) so persons with disabilities have basic access into single family homes when visiting friends or family;

- Repeal [HB 1300](#) so those most at-risk for homelessness, including our homeless veterans, can find housing of their choice with their Section 8 or VASH housing choice voucher or due to their use of disability income;
- Demand full protection under our fair housing laws for sexual orientation, gender identity, domestic violence survivors, and due to age;
- Change state laws so cities may adequately operate building inspection programs to ensure basic rental housing habitability;
- Educate the public about the significant and unique housing challenges for those new to our country, who have language barriers, or who are undocumented; and
- Ensure that if a tenant wants to achieve the American dream of homeownership that they do not experience lending or insurance discrimination in that process.

Because everyone deserves safe, affordable, accessible housing free from discrimination.

“We thank Mayor Hogsett and to all the people who worked to make this new housing initiative possible,” continued Nelson. “We appreciate Indy’s leadership on this initiative and the broader discussion. The FHCCI looks forward to working with you on this new initiative and to address our other housing challenges.”

The FHCCI also encourages review of several tenant or consumer based housing bills pending before the 2020 Indiana General Assembly that would assist in meeting Indianapolis’ and Indiana’s housing needs: [HB 1012](#), [HB 1103](#), [HB 1191](#), [SB 253](#), and [SB 359](#).

The Fair Housing Center of Central Indiana (FHCCI) is a private, non-profit fair housing organization founded in 2011 and based in Indianapolis, Indiana. Its mission is to ensure equal housing opportunities by eliminating housing discrimination through advocacy, enforcement, education and outreach. For more information, visit: www.fhcci.org