



Karen L. Richards  
Executive Director  
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# Mission

The Commission promotes full civil and human rights in Vermont. The Commission protects people from unlawful discrimination in housing, state government employment and public accommodations and pursues its mission by enforcing laws, mediating disputes, educating the public and providing information and referrals.



# Duties

## The Commission:

- Works to create public awareness of the importance of human and civil rights
- Examines and evaluates the effectiveness of Vermont's civil rights laws
- Identifies the existence of practices of discrimination that detract from the full enjoyment of civil and human rights
- Recommends measures to protect those rights

# Commissioners

- There are five (5) Commissioners appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate.
- They are appointed for five (5) year terms which are staggered so that one Commissioner's term ends each year.
- Commissioners can be reappointed.
- At least one Commissioner must be a member of a racial minority.

# Current Commissioners

Mary Marzec-Gerrior, Chair- (Proctor)

2008-2018

Donald Vickers- (Georgia) 2008- 2016

Mary Brodsky- (Essex) 2011- 2019

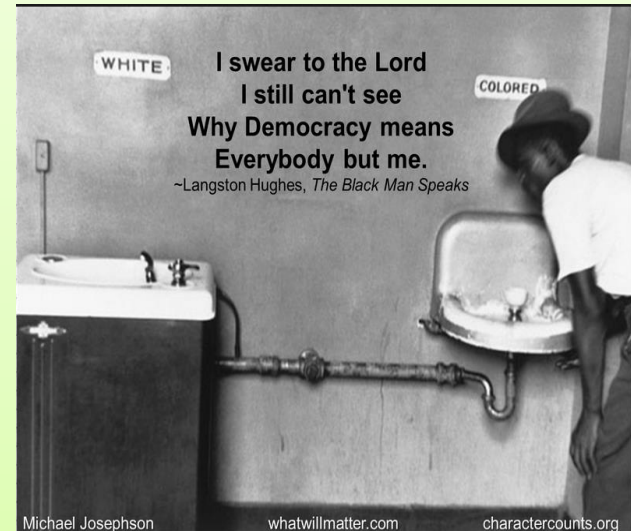
Nathan Besio- (Colchester) 2007- 2017

Mercedes Mack- (Burlington) 2011-2015

# Enforcement

The HRC has three investigators who conduct impartial investigations into allegations of discrimination in the areas of:

- **Housing**- rental and sales
- **Public Accommodations**- any establishment or facility that offers services, goods, facilities, privileges, advantages, or benefits to the public
- **State Government Employment**- (private employment issues go to the Attorney General)



# State vs. Federal Law

- Vermont law provides protections similar to those provided under the federal Civil Rights Act of 1964 specifically Title II (public accommodations), Title VI (access to government services), Title VII (employment), Title VIII (housing) and §§503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the American's with Disabilities Act (ADA) (disability)
- Vermont law has more protected categories than federal law

# Protected Categories Employment

**Race**

**Color**

**Creed (religion)**

**Sex**

**National Origin**

Sexual Orientation

Gender Identity

**Disability**

Marital Status

Ancestry

Place of Birth

Credit History or credit report

Workers' Compensation

**Parental/Family Medical Leave**

Breastfeeding





# Protected Categories Vary by Type of Case

## HOUSING

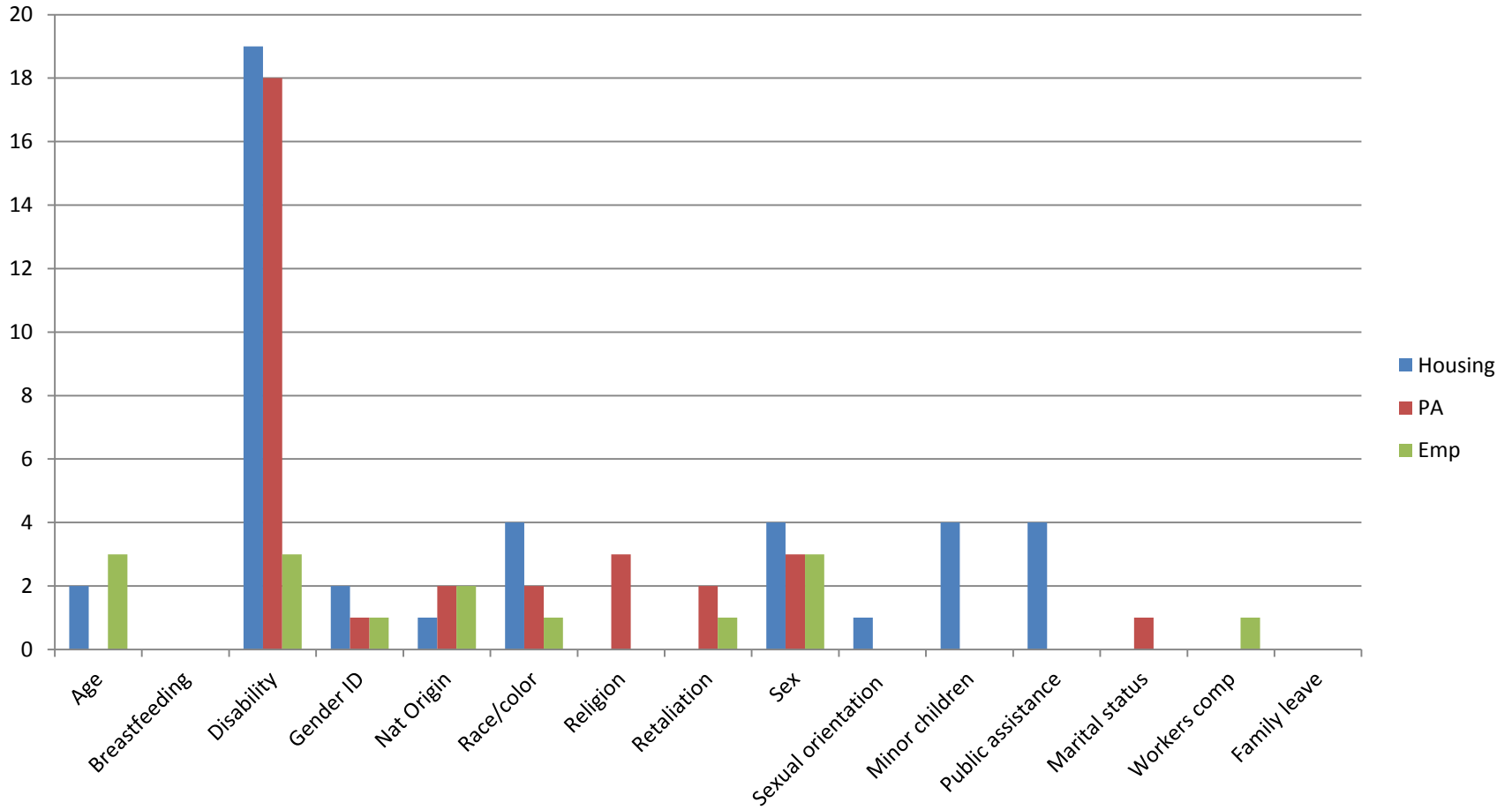
**Race**  
**Color**  
**Creed (religion)**  
**Sex**  
**National Origin**  
Sexual Orientation  
Gender Identity  
**Disability**  
Marital Status  
**Age**  
Receipt of Public Assistance  
**Having Minor Children**

## PUBLIC ACCOMMODATIONS

**Race**  
**Color**  
**Creed (religion)**  
**Sex**  
**National Origin**  
Sexual Orientation  
Gender Identity  
**Disability**  
Breastfeeding

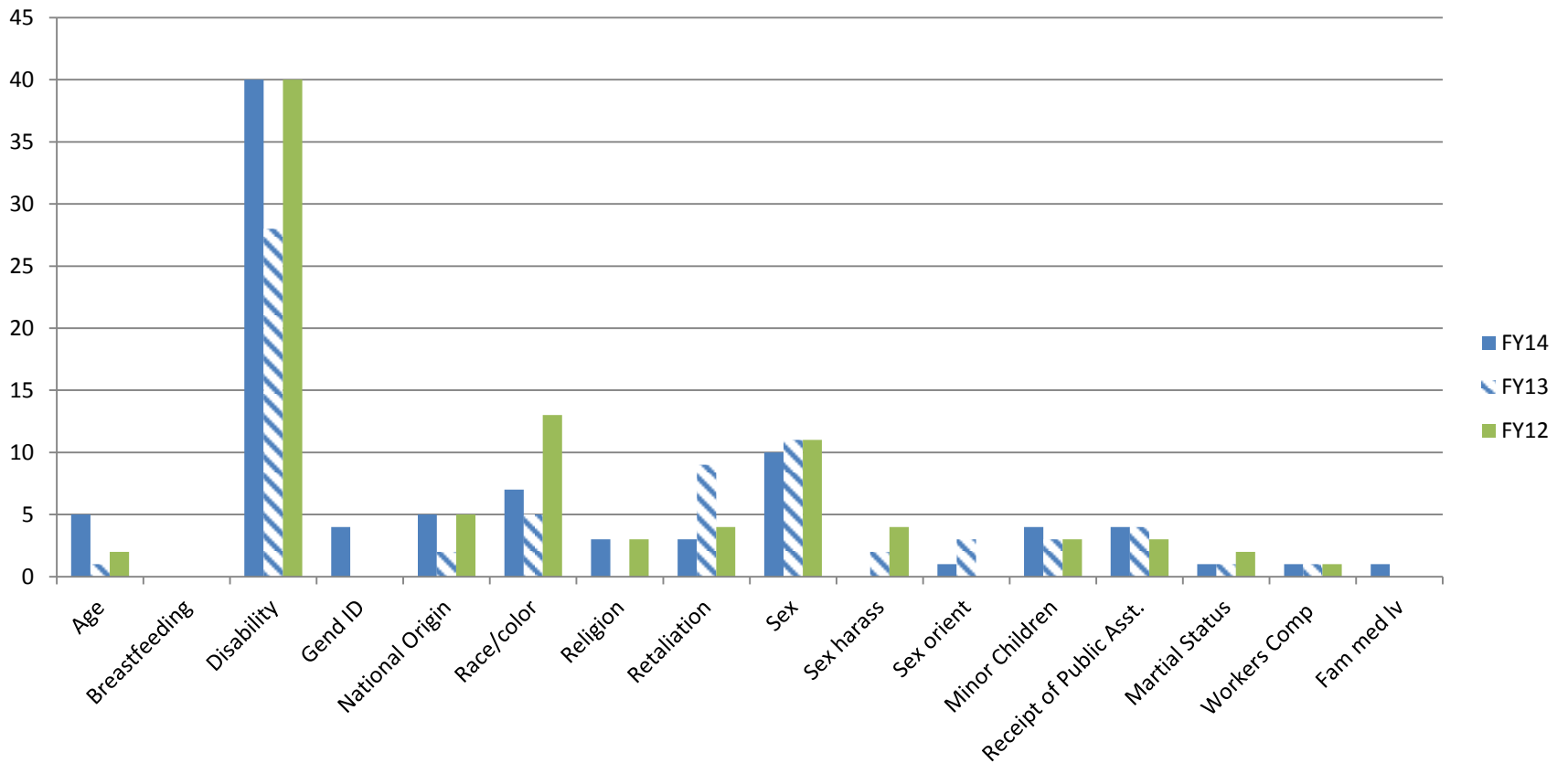
# Type of Case and Protected Category

## FY14

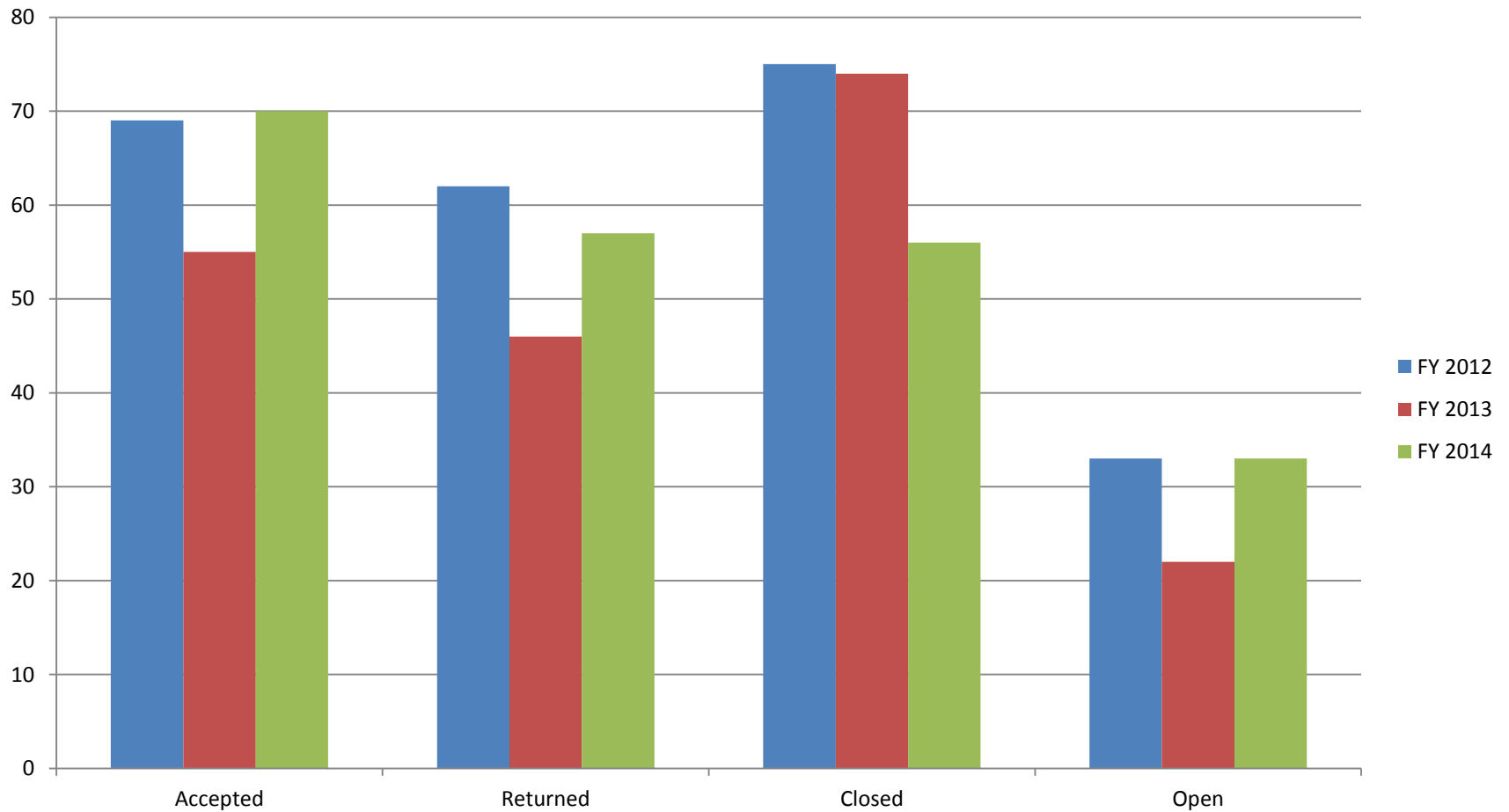


# Fiscal Year Comparisons

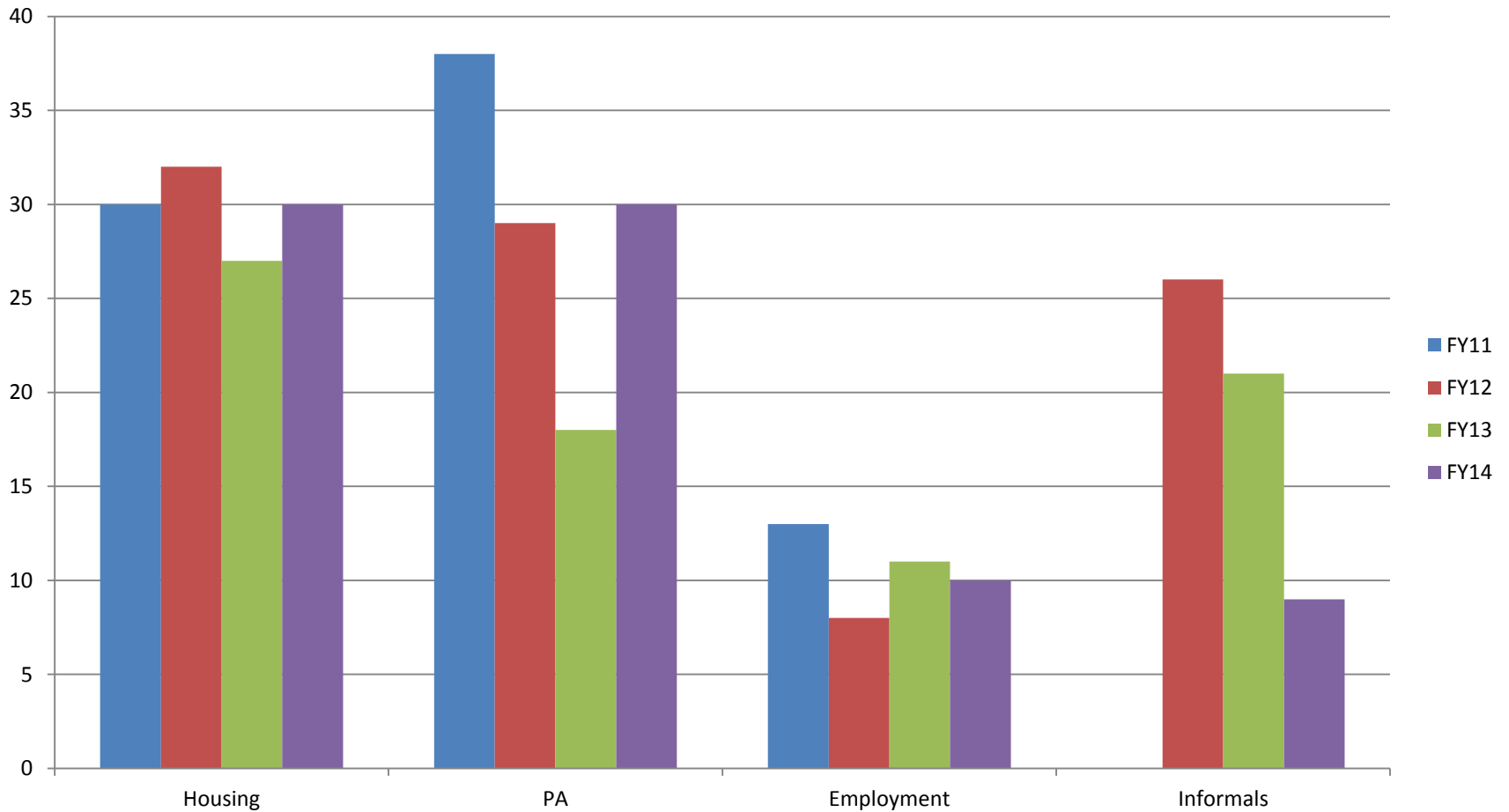
## FY14 - FY13 - FY12 Protected Categories



# Complaints Filed FY12-14



# Complaints FY11-14 By Type of Case



# OUTCOMES- FY14

Fifty-six (56) cases were closed:

- 24 settled either pre or post-determination
- 11 cases were heard by the Commissioners  
Of those, 4 were reasonable grounds and 8 were no reasonable grounds
- 10 were administratively dismissed or withdrawn
- 11 charges were sent out but not returned

# RELIEF

**Monetary settlements: \$345,000**

**Public interest relief:**

- Training
- Changes in policies or procedures
- Job restored, supervisor changed, etc.
- Accommodation granted
- Premises made more accessible

# Training and Outreach

- Staff provided training to 37 groups or individuals
- Staff attended and participated in 20 other outreach related activities

New statistics being gathered for FY15 will allow us to better track the number of individuals reached. In the first 6 months of FY15, we have provided training or outreach to 388 people.



# Contact Information

Vermont Human Rights Commission

14-16 Baldwin St.

Montpelier, VT 05633-6301

Tele: 828-1625 or 828-2480

Toll Free: 800-416-2010

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