

**No. R-137. House concurrent resolution designating April 2019 as Fair Housing Month in Vermont.**

(H.C.R.111)

Offered by: Representatives Stevens of Waterbury, Birong of Vergennes, Christie of Hartford, Cina of Burlington, Colburn of Burlington, Colston of Winooski, Donovan of Burlington, Gamache of Swanton, Gonzalez of Winooski, Hango of Berkshire, Hashim of Dummerston, Howard of Rutland City, Killacky of South Burlington, Long of Newfane, O'Sullivan of Burlington, Rachelson of Burlington, Szott of Barnard, Troiano of Stannard, and Walz of Barre City

Whereas, on April 11, 1968, President Lyndon Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act of 1968, Pub. L. 90-284, including Title VIII, known as the Fair Housing Act (the Act), and

Whereas, the Act, as amended, mandates a national policy of fair housing without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, or familial status, encouraging fair housing opportunities for all citizens, and

Whereas, for generations, millions of Americans were denied the housing of their choice because of these factors, and

Whereas, segregated concentrations of people with lower income, especially people of color, have been living in communities that offer less opportunity than the communities where middle- and upper-income white Americans reside, and

Whereas, 19 years after the Act was signed, the Vermont General Assembly enacted 1987 Acts and Resolves No. 74, An act relating to discrimination, establishing a new chapter in Title 9 of the Vermont Statutes Annotated, and

Whereas, chapter 139, as now codified, prohibits discrimination in the sale and rental of housing based on race, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, marital status, religious creed, color, national origin, having a disability, or having minor children, making Vermont's housing antidiscrimination law among the nation's most comprehensive, and

Whereas, despite both these federal and State legal guarantees, the dilemma of housing discrimination in Vermont has not disappeared, especially for persons with a disability or persons living with children, and

Whereas, 9 V.S.A. § 4503(a)(12) additionally prohibits the unfair housing practice in Vermont of discriminating "in land use decisions or in the permitting of housing," on account of "income, or because of receipt of public assistance, except as otherwise provided by law," and

Whereas, despite this statutory prohibition, the persistent lack of affordable housing in Vermont is exacerbating discrimination and remains one of the important reasons for vigilance on fair housing issues in 2019, and

Whereas, advocates for fair housing are gathered at the State House today, April 3, 2019, to remind the members of the General Assembly that fair housing continues to be an issue in Vermont in 2019, now therefore be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the General Assembly designates April 2019 as Fair Housing Month in Vermont, and be it further

Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to the Vermont Human Rights Commission.