



PRESS RELEASE
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Wyoming Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights Releases Report on Housing Discrimination

The Wyoming Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights released a report, [*Housing Discrimination: Fair Housing Practices in Wyoming*](#), following a series of web hearings. During this study, the Committee heard testimony and received written statements from various stakeholders with insight on housing practices in Wyoming such as researchers, advocates, impacted individuals, and government officials.

Through the testimony they received, the Committee identified several key concerns. The Committee identified the following findings:

- (i) marginalized groups are experiencing housing discrimination in Wyoming, particularly individuals who are disabled and racial minorities;
- (ii) barriers exist in reporting alleged instances of housing discrimination in Wyoming;
- (iii) barriers exist in enforcing the federal and state fair housing laws in Wyoming;
- (iv) rates of housing discrimination may be correlated with the lack of available affordable housing; and
- (v) restrictive land use regulations and zoning may be used as tools for excluding certain groups.

The recommendations noted in the report are directed to the Commission asking for corrective actions from stakeholders including the U.S. Congress, the Wyoming Legislature, the Wyoming Governor, and the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Key recommendations include:

- (i) assign enforcement authority, under the Wyoming Fair Housing Act, to the Wyoming Attorney General's Office of Consumer Complaints Division;
- (ii) make affordable housing a priority throughout the state of Wyoming, including creating and maintaining a Wyoming Housing Trust Fund with a focus on building and rehabilitating affordable housing;
- (iii) remove unenforceable racist and/or discriminatory language that still exist in some real property covenants; and
- (iv) conduct additional compliance reviews of recipients of HUD funding within Wyoming, particularly in Riverton, Wyoming.

Wyoming Advisory Committee Chair, James O'Brien said: "Access to affordable housing in Wyoming is challenging for renters and owners. It is even more difficult when landlords and sellers unfairly and unlawfully discriminate. The Committee is pleased to have the opportunity to study housing discrimination in Wyoming and to prepare recommendations that directly address the problem. We are very thankful to all the experts who shared their knowledge and experience with us. We hope that the Wyoming

legislature carefully considers the findings our Committee made in our report and adopts legislation reflecting our recommendations. We also urge Governor Gordon to assign responsibility for enforcing the Wyoming Fair Housing Act to the State's Attorney General so that Wyoming residents can obtain relief in Wyoming.”

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The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, established by the Civil Rights Act of 1957, is the only independent, bipartisan agency charged with advising the President and Congress on civil rights and reporting annually on federal civil rights enforcement. Our 56 Advisory Committees offer a broad perspective on civil rights concerns at state and local levels. For information about the Commission, please visit www.usccr.gov and follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).