



For Immediate Release

September 1, 2021

Contact:

Lincoln Larmond | lincoln.mu@gmail.com |

**Community Coalition Seeks Answers to Fair Housing Questionnaire
From Mayoral Candidates**

The Fair Housing Act was passed in 1968, a week after the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. He and other civil rights leaders insisted that fair housing is fundamental to the quality of life for all people. That act challenged the nation, its people, and public institutions to act to eliminate barriers to realizing this fundamental right. The Community Advisory Committee for Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (CAC), a coalition of community, civil rights, and fair housing activists, have sent a Fair Housing Questionnaire to all five candidates running for Mayor of Boston, seeking their views on the very critical fair housing issues facing the City. Only two of the five candidates have responded.

Eight questions were sent to the candidates on August 6, 2021, with a due date for responses of August 20, 2021. Four of the five acknowledged receipt of the questionnaire. Two of them responded: City Councilor Michelle Wu and City Councilor Annessa Essaibi George. The questions seek to distinguish between the common commitment to increasing the availability of affordable housing and the legal obligation to remove barriers and create opportunity. The questions also prompt the candidates to discuss in concrete ways how they will address the glaring housing disparities for members of protected classes, particularly people of color.

The CAC has published the questions and the candidates' answers here: [Fair Housing Questionnaire](#). The CAC believes these questions merit the attention of the candidates and is hopeful that those who did not respond to the questionnaire will address these critical issues before the primary election. We hope voters will consider this information as they ponder who will best move Boston toward greater realization of racial equity, social justice, and fair housing as envisioned by the Fair Housing Act.

The Community Advisory Committee on Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (CAC) has been working for five years with the City of Boston to address the challenge presented by President Obama's 2015 [fair housing rule](#), which required communities in receipt of HUD funding to Affirmatively Further Fair Housing. That rule, which laid out requirements to act affirmatively to remove documented impediments to fair housing, was [suspended](#) by the Trump administration, but the city of Boston committed to continuing this important work. This partnership yielded a comprehensive report, the [City of Boston Assessment of Fair Housing \(AFH\)](#), that documents the historical forces at work and current obstacles to fair housing, as well as recommendations for how to address continuing inequities.

In April 2021, the Boston City Council passed a unanimous resolution that recognized the City of Boston Assessment of Fair Housing (AFH) and supported "its adoption and implementation of the stated policies and goals." Formal adoption by the city will be the first step on the pathway to implementing the wide-ranging recommendations, which were generated with considerable input from residents across the city.

According to James Jennings, Tufts University Professor Emeritus, who researched and drafted the report, "Our candidates must share with the voters their understanding of fair housing and how they will address the critical issues we face." CAC Chair Lincoln Larmond further announced that "The CAC is pleased to share with the public the candidates' fair housing priorities and intends to sponsor a debate between the two finalists in the fall focused on fair housing issues."

##

MEMBERS OF THE CAC:

Nadine Cohen
Margaret Turner
Greater Boston Legal Services

Lincoln Larmond
Kathy Brown
Marly Frederique
Boston Tenant Coalition

Dr. David J. Harris, retired
*Charles Hamilton Houston Institute
for Race & Justice at Harvard
Law School*

Dwaign Tyndal
Sofia E. Owen
*Alternatives for Community
& Environment (ACE)*

Dr. James Jennings
Professor Emeritus
Tufts University

Hajar Logan
*Enterprise Development TR Corp
Tufts University (MPP2022)*