



National
Urban League



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**Five Leading Civil Rights Organizations Deeply Concerned About Nomination of
Ben Carson to Lead Department of Housing and Urban Development *Leaders***

Submit Letter to Senate Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Committee

Washington, DC -- Five leading civil rights groups [submitted a letter](#) to the Senate Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Committee expressing serious concern over the nomination of Dr. Ben Carson to be the United States Secretary of Housing and Urban Development. The letter is signed by Sherrilyn Ifill, President and Director-Counsel of the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc., Hilary O. Shelton, Director of the Washington Bureau and Senior Vice President for Advocacy and Policy of the NAACP, Wade Henderson, President of the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, Marc H. Morial, President of the National Urban League, and Melanie L. Campbell, President and CEO of the National Coalition on Black Civic Participation.

The letter details the importance of the Fair Housing Act, which was passed in the wake of the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and remains one of the nation's most vital civil rights laws. As the letter observes, "equal opportunity in housing is one of our most cherished American values. As our nation becomes more diverse in every way, the FHA helps to foster stronger and more inclusive communities, which are critical to our nation's success and prosperity." The letter notes that "[a]ny prospective HUD Secretary must be steeped in the complexities of housing policy and have a significant commitment to civil rights and fair housing."

The leaders express their concern over Dr. Carson's qualifications to lead HUD and urge the Committee members to fully engage in and fulfill their constitutional duty of advice and consent:

We are deeply concerned about the appointment of Dr. Carson to lead the agency charged with being the guardian of fair housing in this country. He has not demonstrated any of the requisite experience or expertise in fair housing policy. Rather, all publicly available information connecting Dr. Carson to federal housing policy indicates a deep incomprehension of its significance and scope, if not hostility to HUD's mission and our nation's housing policies...

We strongly urge members of the Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committee to thoroughly and carefully examine Dr. Carson's record concerning these issues and ask the Committee members to interrogate Dr. Carson during the upcoming hearing rigorously regarding his fitness to occupy this important post.

Read the full text of the letter [here](#).

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Founded in 1940, the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF) is the nation's first civil and human rights law organization and has been completely separate from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) since 1957—although LDF was originally founded by the NAACP and shares its commitment to equal rights. LDF's Thurgood Marshall Institute is a multi-disciplinary and collaborative hub within LDF that launches targeted campaigns and undertakes innovative research to shape the civil rights narrative. In media attributions, please refer to us as the NAACP Legal Defense Fund or LDF.