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LDF Submits Recommendations for Comprehensive Infrastructure Reform

Today, Richard Rothstein, Distinguished Fellow of the Economic Policy Institute and NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF) Senior Fellow, Emeritus, testified on behalf of himself and LDF President and Director-Counsel Sherrilyn Ifill before the U.S. Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs' hearing on the "Legacy of Racial Discrimination in Housing." In their written testimony, Ms. Ifill and Mr. Rothstein shared the history of the federal government's role in housing discrimination and made recommendations for infrastructure investments to address the inequities which have resulted from the decades of discriminatory federal policies and practices.

"Through purposeful policy decisions, the federal government created a system in which housing and homeownership became critical to the economic stability and upward mobility of families. But those same policies also routinely excluded Black Americans. Indeed, through both *de jure* and *de facto* policies, Black Americans were excluded from accessing the very benefits and opportunities that propelled white Americans into the middle class." Ms. Ifill and Mr. Rothstein remarked in their written testimony.

"The current disparities in housing and homeownership are the result of decades of government policy, some intentionally discriminatory and some woefully negligent. It is incumbent upon the federal government to do its duty and right these wrongs. Fifty-two years after the passage of the Fair Housing Act, our nation still struggles with entrenched housing segregation that contributes to nearly insurmountable societal repercussions. Congress must do everything within its power to ensure that the federal fair housing laws are fully enforced and must take serious action to create policies to address/rectify the years of discriminatory policies and practices which have led to the tremendous inequalities we see today," Ms. Ifill and Mr. Rothstein concluded.

Finally, Ms. Ifill and Mr. Rothstein recommended Congress consider the following five policy recommendations:

- Infrastructure investments in affordable housing stock, urban water systems, public transit, community facilities and centers, schools, and telecommunications.
- Prioritize infrastructure investments in communities and areas which have long been neglected and need them most.
- Vigorous enforcement of Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing.
- Rigorous Title VI enforcement for federal funds supporting local projects.
- Environmental justice review and enforcement.

Read their written testimony [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. LDF 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. Follow LDF on [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#).