



**For Immediate Release**

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## Almost Eighty Percent of Latinos Encounter Housing Discrimination in Frederick County

Equal Rights Center report reveals disparate treatment towards four out of five  
Latinos in investigations

WASHINGTON, D.C., June 2, 2010– Today the [Equal Rights Center](#) (ERC)—a national non-profit civil rights organization— released a report, “[Fair Housing for All: The Disparate Response to Latino Housing in Frederick County, MD.](#)” reporting that when seeking housing in Frederick County, 79 percent of Latinos—four out of five—were subject to discriminatory treatment.

“The fact that almost 80 percent of prospective Latino renters encountered some form of discrimination—irrespective of their immigration status—is not only legally and ethically wrong, it also reflects poor business decisions made by apartment owners that adversely affect the entire community of Frederick,” said ERC Executive Director, Don Kahl. “This form of discrimination does more than just act as a barrier to where a family chooses to live; it has lasting impact on the family’s health, security, and economic well-being.”

In response to experiencing rapid expansions of the Latino populations—a growth of nearly 200% since the year 2000—Frederick County enacted programs said to be targeted to combat the presence of undocumented immigrants. These new policies have resulted in a marked increase in complaints of racial profiling, a greater distrust between the Latino community and law enforcement, and a more negative attitude toward Latinos in general. Based upon several complaints, the ERC conducted investigations throughout 2009 to determine whether or not Latinos faced illegal discrimination when seeking rental housing.

The ERC’s investigations found that 79 percent Latinos seeking housing were subjected to discriminatory treatment—as evidenced by the imposition of different, more adverse terms and conditions on potential Latino tenants when compared to their white counterparts. These actions are in direct violation of the Fair Housing Act, a federal law that prohibits discrimination in the sale or rental of housing, and in other housing-related transactions based on certain personal attributes, including race, color and national origin.

“We hope community members read this report and realize the negative impact this discrimination has upon all of Frederick County’s residents, as well as the significant benefits the community stands to gain by providing equal housing opportunities,” said the ERC’s Immigrant Rights Program Manager, Wendy Ramirez. “Apartment owners must be held accountable and follow the law in order to ensure all families are given equal opportunity to live and enjoy their community.”

To download a PDF of the report visit,

<http://www.equalrightscenter.org/publications/documents/FAIRHOUSINGFORALLfinalreport.pdf>

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**About the Equal Rights Center ([www.equalrightscenter.org](http://www.equalrightscenter.org))**

Originally formed in 1983, the Equal Rights Center (ERC) is a national non-profit civil rights organization based in Washington, D.C. With members located in 33 states and the District of Columbia, the ERC works nationally to promote equal opportunity in housing, employment, disability rights, immigrant rights, and access to public accommodations and government services for all protected classes under federal, state, and local laws.