



# OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT



Dear Colleagues,

By now, many of you may have read media accounts indicating that we've changed HUD's mission statement and that these changes signal some sort of retreat from our legal and rightful role in protecting Americans from housing discrimination. It's not enough that I merely assert these news reports are patently false; it's necessary that I personally address them and reassure *you*, the HUD family, that nothing could be further from the truth.

First, some background. [HUD's current mission statement](#) reads: "HUD's mission is to create strong, sustainable, inclusive communities and quality affordable homes for all. HUD is working to strengthen the housing market to bolster the economy and protect consumers; meet the need for quality affordable rental homes; utilize housing as a platform for improving quality of life; build inclusive and sustainable communities free from discrimination, and transform the way HUD does business."

A bit wordy perhaps but I agree with every word. The Department's mission statement has changed from time to time to capture the dynamic nature of our work. It changed in 2003 and again in 2010. Now, in 2018, we *are* considering another change to our mission statement and are seeking comments and ideas from our senior staff. But the notion that any new mission statement would reflect a lack of commitment to fair housing is nonsense. Yesterday, we issued a public statement to correct the record.

"As in previous Administrations, HUD is considering modest changes to the Department's mission statement to make it a more clear and concise expression of the historic work this agency performs on behalf of the American people. You can be sure of one thing—*any* mission statement for this Department will embody the principle of fairness as a central element of everything that we do. HUD has been, is now, and will always be committed to ensuring inclusive housing, free from discrimination for all Americans."

Next month, we will mark the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Fair Housing Act. In signing that landmark bill into law, President Johnson said, "Fair Housing for all, all human beings who live in this country, is now a part of the American way of life." I believe that and I know you do too. The ideals of that law, and our continuing work to support them, are really quite simple—fair is fair.

Thank you for all you do to give meaning and substance to our mission.

Sincerely,

Secretary Ben Carson