



DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING COMMISSIONER EVONNE M. KLEIN RECEIVES PRESTIGIOUS EDWARD M. KENNEDY LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY AWARD

CT Fair Housing Center selects recipients who have made significant strides to promote fair housing in the legislative process



(HARTFORD, CT) – DOH Commissioner Evonne M. Klein received the Connecticut Fair Housing Center’s **Edward M. Kennedy Legislative Advocacy Award** in recognition of her efforts to expand access to affordable housing through legislative action that would discourage exclusionary zoning practices and eliminate archaic and undefined terminology in the state’s zoning statutes. Through her work as co-chair of the state’s Fair Housing Working Group, Commissioner Klein oversaw the introduction of five legislative proposals that would promote inclusivity and fairness—making Connecticut a better place to live, work, and raise a family. Each

year, the center selects recipients who have made significant strides to bring fair housing issues to the forefront of the legislative process. In addition to Commissioner Klein, the other co-chair of the Fair Housing Working Group State Representative Roland Lemar (D-New Haven), also received this honor.

“I am honored and humbled to receive this year’s Edward M. Kennedy Legislative Advocacy Award alongside Representative Lemar who is a great champion for fair housing,” **said Commissioner Klein**. “Though the legislature did not enact the Fair Housing Working Group’s recommendations this session, we started the tough conversations and a growing number of legislators have shown they are committed to making appropriate changes so we can dismantle the barriers to opportunity that still exist for so many.”

Klein continued, “Breaking down the barriers to opportunity means acknowledging that the pockets of segregation in our society did not happen by chance. They were formed as a result of carefully crafted government policies in the early 1900’s. Exclusionary zoning, redlining, and housing discrimination are now illegal thanks to the federal Fair Housing Act of 1968. However, the effect of their long term existence is a challenge we still face. We need organizations like the Connecticut Fair Housing Center to work on the front lines, battling discriminatory housing practices and segregation each and every day.”

The mission of the [Connecticut Fair Housing Center](#) is to ensure that all people have equal access to housing opportunities in Connecticut. Because housing discrimination disproportionately affects people with low incomes, the Center focuses on the intersection of poverty and housing discrimination. The Center also assists Connecticut homeowners who have been hit hardest by the nation’s ongoing foreclosure crisis. Since 1994, the Connecticut Fair Housing Center has provided free investigative and legal services to residents who believe they have been the victims of housing discrimination.

The Center also has provided education and conducted outreach on fair housing and fair lending issues throughout Connecticut. In addition, the Center has worked with the State of Connecticut, cities, towns, housing developers, housing managers, and others to promote compliance with federal fair housing laws.

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