Michigan and Housing Discrimination, 1949-1968

by

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Although the Michigan Committee on Civil Rights, just before G. Mennen Williams was inaugurated as Michigan’s governor in 1949, pointed to segregated housing as a civil rights issue with which the state of Michigan should deal, Michigan did not enact a state fair-housing law until 1968.1 This was not because the state’s governors during the period of inaction lacked a commitment to civil rights issues—quite the contrary—but largely because of the widespread opposition in the state to fair housing legislation. As Burton Levy, director of community services of the Michigan Civil Rights Commission, declared in 1965, although the state’s whites “at least” claimed that they favored merit employment, there was “vocal opposition to equality in housing from many segments of the community, including ‘respectable’ individuals and organizations.”2

The delay in enacting a state fair-housing law did not mean that no progress had been made in Michigan in the preceding two decades in dealing with housing discrimination. By 1968 the state government had banned discrimination in public housing, the Michigan Civil Rights Commission had mounted a major attack on housing discrimination, and several Michigan cities had adopted fair housing ordinances. Just as the

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1 Memorandum Submitted by the Michigan Committee on Civil Rights to the Committee on Civil Rights ... [Dec. 1948], Box 3, G. Mennen Williams Papers (hereafter Williams Papers), Bentley Historical Library, Ann Arbor, MI (hereafter BHL).

2 Memorandum, Levy to Burton Gordin, 31 August 1965, Box 28, Records of the Michigan Civil Rights Commission: Administrative, Record Group (hereafter RG) 74-90, Michigan State Archives, Lansing, MI.
DETROIT NEIGHBORHOODS (1970)
Based on Judy Stamp Humphrey, *Segregation and Integration: A Geography of People in Metropolitan Detroit* (Detroit: Advancement Press, 1972)
riots following the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. facilitated the passage of the federal Civil Rights Act of 1968, which included fair housing, so the Detroit riot of July 1967, “the worst racial disturbance” of the century to that time, provided the impetus for the passage of Michigan’s fair housing law as well as similar measures in many Michigan communities.

Housing segregation in the years 1949-1968 was pervasive in Detroit and its suburbs, where 79 percent of the state’s 450,000 blacks as of 1950 resided, and in the rest of Michigan as well. As Detroit’s black population increased from 16 percent of the total in 1950 to 29 percent in 1960, housing segregation grew worse in the city. After conducting housing hearings in several Michigan communities, the Michigan Civil Rights Commission concluded in 1967 that about 90 percent of Michigan’s nonwhites lived in residentially segregated areas. “Negroes,” it stated, “have been forced to live apart in urban ghettos throughout the State of Michigan and, in some cases, in rural ghettos.”

Nonwhites were not only victims of housing discrimination; they also lived in housing inferior to that of whites and for which they paid disproportionately high rents as compared to whites. In Detroit in 1960, for example, 27.9 percent of black homes were “dilapidated or deteriorating” as compared to 9.8 percent of white homes. Blacks “lived in housing that was overcrowded, rat infested, and had leaky roofs, holes in the walls, and defective plumbing.” “Segregated housing patterns,” moreover, served to “perpetuate and aggravate discriminatory practices and attitudes in all sections of community life, including schools, churches and public facilities.” They led, civil rights advocates maintained, to “increased mortality, morbidity, delinquency, risk of fire, inter-group tension, loss of tax revenue and other harmful conditions.”


Blacks were not the only victims of housing discrimination; Jews and members of various ethnic groups were similarly affected. A 1958 survey of real-estate agents in the Detroit suburbs revealed that 56 percent of them discriminated against Jews in "varying degrees." As the nation learned in 1960, and as will become evident later in this article, the affluent Grosse Pointe suburbs of Detroit had, since 1945, been using a screening system that discriminated against blacks, Jews, and other ethnic groups seeking to purchase homes there.⁵

Prominent among "a nucleus of liberal Democrats" who had joined with the United Automobile Workers (UAW) to "remold the [Michigan] Democratic party into a real liberal-progressive political party," Mennen Williams was committed to the promotion of civil rights. As a Michigan black leader of the time recalled, Williams "identified with the kind of gut issues that affected the blacks' life chances." Until 1955, however, Williams focused his efforts in the civil rights field not on housing but on an ultimately successful effort to secure a state fair employment practices law. This was largely because "of all the forms of inequality to which the Negro group . . . [at the time was] subjected, job discrimination . . . [was] the most widely experienced, and its impact more acutely felt, than any other."⁶

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In the first decade after World War II, state governments generally sought to deal with housing discrimination by enacting laws to prohibit discrimination in public housing. Six states had already taken that action by the time Michigan adopted a law in April 1952 providing that all persons in the state’s jurisdiction were to “be entitled to full and equal accommodations, advantages, facilities and privileges of . . . public housing.” In Detroit, where most of the state’s public housing units were located, the 1952 law led the Detroit Housing Commission to rescind its policy of racial occupancy of public housing units that corresponded with the racial composition of the neighborhood in which the housing was located. The next year the commission opened and operated a housing project on an integrated basis, but it did not really depart from its pre-1952 policy until a federal circuit court of appeals on 15 October 1955 upheld a lower court decision enjoining the commission from maintaining racially segregated projects, leasing public housing units on the basis of race or color, and maintaining separate lists of white and black applicants for public housing. The commission’s decision to appeal the lower court ruling had “appalled” supporters of housing integration. As of December 1964, five of Detroit’s seven public housing projects had been integrated, but two were still made up entirely of black residents, allegedly because black tenants themselves wanted it that way.⁷

State governments followed the effort to bar discrimination in public housing by enacting laws to prohibit racial discrimination in publicly assisted housing. Beginning with New York in 1950, seven states had taken such action by the end of 1957, but neither Michigan nor any of its neighboring states was among them.⁸ The Williams administration had hesitated to deal with the matter not only because of the strong

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² Lockard, Equal Opportunity, 117-18.
emotions that open occupancy aroused but also because the Michigan legislature was dominated by Republicans, many of whom were from small towns or rural areas and were disinclined to support legislation designed to benefit minority groups predominantly residing in the state’s larger cities. Williams was aware, however, that the civil rights forces in the state had become “restive” because “nothing special [was] being done” in this area. Concerned that if the state did not expand its civil rights efforts there might be racial trouble in Detroit and possibly elsewhere in the state, Williams had decided, by the end of 1957, to include publicly assisted housing within the jurisdiction of a proposed civil rights commission that would replace the Fair Employment Practices Commission.9

In his message to the Sixty-Ninth Michigan Legislature on 9 January 1958, Williams urged the enactment of legislation forbidding discrimination in the sale or rental of housing of four or more “contiguously located units” financed with or dependent on public aid, including loan guarantees. In a more sweeping proposal, he also called for legislation to prohibit state-licensed real-estate brokers and agents from accepting discriminatory property listings and from discriminating in transactions involving the sale or rental of any housing.10

In response to the governor’s recommendation, two bills were introduced in the Michigan House—composed at the time of sixty-one Republicans and forty-nine Democrats—but both bills failed of enactment. The same fate befell three housing bills introduced in the 1959 legislature, of which one, introduced by the Lincoln-style Republican Louis Cramton of Lapeer, applied to private as well as public housing. Homeowners, taxpayers, realtors, and builders registered

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their opposition to the 1959 bills. The objectives of the coalition of civil rights groups supporting the measures, according to the vice president of the Michigan Real Estate Association, were “the scrapping of property rights and the adoption of Communist ideology through the ownership of property by the state.” Republican Speaker of the House Don R. Pears of Buchanan asserted that a “frequent question” asked about open occupancy was whether it would lead to a black influx into white neighborhoods, and a representative of the Detroit Taxpayers Union warned that “every apartment building in Detroit . . . [would] be emptied of white people” were any of the bills to pass. Veteran lawmakers reported that the opposition to the bills was “more outspoken than any within their memory” regarding social legislation.11

In the 1960 legislature Democrats in the House and Senate once again introduced bills to limit housing discrimination, as Williams had recommended. Four hundred blacks from all over Michigan converged on the state capitol on 9 March to push the bills, which nevertheless did not emerge from committee.12

The public revelation in 1960 of the Grosse Pointe screening system for the disposition of private property in the five Grosse Pointes in suburban Detroit overshadowed the failed legislative efforts to deal with housing discrimination. Secretly adopted in 1945 by the Grosse Pointe Brokers Association (GPBA), the system involved the use of a private detective to investigate prospective home purchasers. The investigation was divided into two parts. Section A, for fifty points, was concerned

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with whether the prospect’s “way of living” was “American.” The questions dealt with such matters as the prospect’s country of origin, his occupation, whether his friends were “predominantly American,” his appearance (very or slightly “swarthy”), and his accent. Section B, for the remaining fifty points, was concerned with a prospect’s “General Standing,” including such matters as whether his “dealings” were considered “reputable,” how neighbors viewed his family, his dress, and his education, and the appearance of his home. There were separate questions concerning religion, grammar, and military service.

The minimum passing grade for a prospect was fifty. At the time the system was revealed, Polish Americans needed fifty-five points to qualify; southern Europeans (Italian Americans, Greek Americans) seventy-five points; and Jews, eighty-five points, later raised to ninety. Because Jews were viewed as “different from those in other categories,” they received fewer points than other prospects for the same answers. Blacks, persons of “Oriental” descent, and Mexicans were entirely eliminated from consideration.

The detective sent three copies of his report to the Grosse Pointe Property Owners Association (GPPOA) and three to the members of a rotating committee of three brokers, each of whom graded the report. If the prospect received a passing grade from two committee members, the broker who had initiated the inquiry was so informed. If the prospect failed, the committee notified members of the GPBA, other brokers who used the system, including a few in Detroit, and a few builders. An “Explanatory Leaflet” sent to GPPOA members stated that the only purpose of the screening system was to maintain property values by keeping out “undesirables.” The leaflet pointed out that since United States Supreme Court decisions had made restrictive covenants “virtually unenforceable,” “gaps in the screening process” could be “closed to the extent that there . . . [was] behind the plan a large and active group of property owners determined to close them.”

Of 1597 prospects investigated from 1945 to 1960, 939 passed and 658 failed. Others qualified without investigation. If a broker sold property to an ineligible prospect, the broker was to forfeit to the GPBA the commission for the sale, including the share of the salesman. If this was not done, the offending broker was expelled from the association.
The fund that paid for the system was derived from a $30 assessment on members of the GPBA, 10 percent of the gross commissions of the brokers and any money they paid in fines, and dues paid by the approximately one thousand members of the GPPOA, which had been formed in 1950 and whose members were assessed "in proportion to the value of the property protected."\(^\text{13}\)

The Grosse Pointe system first came to public attention as the result of a suit brought in the St. Clair County Circuit Court by John A. Maxwell. Unable to complete a "mansion" he was building, Maxwell had borrowed $50,000 from Grosse Pointe Properties, Inc., which had been formed "specifically to assist in the completion of the house" and which took a mortgage on the property and reserved the right to approve or disapprove any prospective purchaser thereof. When Maxwell sought to pay off the mortgage, Grosse Pointe Properties ruled him "undesirable," presumably because the United States government was prosecuting him for fraud. Maxwell charged that the GPBA and the GPPOA had formed Grosse Pointe Properties specifically to prevent him from selling his property to a black buyer. During the course of the trial, Maxwell's attorney, in questioning the executive secretary of the GPPOA, "uncovered" the existence of the screening system.\(^\text{14}\)

The Maxwell trial was ignored by the press, but the Michigan Regional Office of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, which had become aware of the trial, secured a copy of the form used to rate prospective Grosse Pointe property buyers and then held a press


\(^{14}\) Norma C. Thomas, Rule 9 (New York: Random House, 1966), 30-31; Rights 3: 71, Box 314, Williams Papers. In an earlier case, William E. Bufalino, president of a Teamsters local, filed a $1,000,000 suit against the GPBA and the GPPOA charging discrimination against him because he was of Italian extraction, was characterized as "medium swarthy," and was associated with the juke box business. He eventually lost his suit. Detroit News, 12, 15 May 1960, 26 December 1961, 2 October 1962; clipping, Ann Arbor News, 16 February 1961, Box 9, BG Papers.
conference on the subject. It supplied information regarding the system to Michigan's attorney general, Paul Adams, and its Corporation and Securities commissioner, Lawrence Gubow, as well as to local television stations, the local office of Time magazine, and the New York Times. The screening system became international news, not just national news, receiving front-page treatment in Switzerland, Australia, Japan, and Hong Kong.15

Adams, on 18 April 1960, denounced the Grosse Pointe system as "morally corrupt" and revealed that his office was investigating it. Governor Williams characterized the system as "odious" and "strange and unhealthy." In a joint statement, the GPBA and GPPOA responded that "the system would seem to be the most careful and considerate method possible for making the best of a difficult fact—of prejudices which affect real estate values."16

Adams and Gubow, both staunch civil rights advocates, arranged for public hearings on the point system that began in Detroit on 2 May 1960 and attracted both a national and international press. Speaking for the Grosse Pointe realtors, Paul Maxon claimed that the same plan was followed in "fine residential communities" elsewhere in the nation but in a "more informal manner." It was "a sincere attempt to maintain values and maintain neighborhoods," declared the president of the GPBA, conceding that prejudice was "undemocratic." An audience of forty, mostly women, cheered Maxon when he finished reading his statement and occasionally "hooted" the state's solicitor general, who questioned Maxon.17

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17 Detroit News, 3, 5, 12-14 May 1960; Detroit Free Press, 2, 13 May 1960; memorandum, Brown to Governor, 5 May 1960, Box 313, Williams Papers; Thomas, Rule 9, 19, 20, 26, 36-37, 40.
“Any system that rates American people on a point system,” Adams had said at the beginning of the hearings, “is un-American, and I will do everything in my power to strike it down.” It is hardly surprising, therefore, that when the hearings concluded on 13 May, Gubow and he announced that a rule was needed to govern “the unlawful activities by brokers under a screening system based on discriminations in regard to race, color, or creed.” In a letter to the attorneys for the GPBA and GPPOA, Gubow and Adams advised that “there must be a complete and absolute abandonment of the screening and reporting system” within thirty days or the state would impose all sanctions permitted under the law. Responding with defiance, the two associations criticized the hearings as a “cheap political circus to further the personal political ambitions of the attorney general.”

On 27 May the Corporation and Securities Commission announced a proposed rule—it became Rule 9—to govern the discriminatory acts of licensed real-estate brokers and salesmen. A broker or a salesman, the rule stated,

acting individually or jointly with others, shall not refuse to sell or offer for sale, or to buy, or offer to buy, or to appraise or to list, or to negotiate the purchase, sale, exchange or mortgage of real estate, or to negotiate for the construction of buildings thereon, or to lease or offer for lease, or to rent or offer for rent, any real estate or improvements thereon, or any other service performed as broker or salesman, because of the race, color, religion, national origin or ancestry of any person or persons.

Under existing law, the Corporation and Securities Commission could revoke the license of a real-estate broker or salesman for “unfair

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dealing," and the commission was now proposing to construe racial, ethnic, and religious discrimination as "unfair dealing."19

Although official adoption of the rule did not require prior public hearings, the commission nevertheless held such hearings in Detroit on 21 June and in Grand Rapids on 28 June. The principal opposition to the rule at the hearings came from real-estate associations, brokers, and homeowner groups. "The overwhelming preponderance of testimony," Gubow announced regarding the hearings, "confirmed the need for State action" and not only for the Grosse Pointes. The Corporation and Securities Commission, consequently, formally adopted Rule 9 on 30 June; it was to go into effect on 14 August 1960.20 Realtors reacted to the adoption of Rule 9 by conducting "a massive campaign to panic home-owners." There was also strong opposition in the state legislature, both houses voting in the 1961 session to overturn the rule. The legislators, however, could not override the veto of Democratic Governor John B. Swainson, Williams's successor.21

In the event, Rule 9 never went into effect, although the GPBA officially terminated the screening system on 24 August 1960 and the GPPOA, for all practical purposes, followed suit. On 13 August, the day before the rule was to go into effect, three Lansing real-estate firms, acting on behalf of the 1975 members of the Michigan Real Estate Association and contending that the rule unconstitutionally deprived property owners of their right to sell their property to whomever they

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wished and would do "great" harm to brokers, secured a restraining order from Ingham County Circuit Court Judge Samuel Street Hughes to prevent the rule from going into effect. The case was eventually appealed to the Michigan Supreme Court, with amici briefs in support of the rule being filed by the American Civil Liberties Union, the NAACP, the Anti-Defamation League, the American Jewish Congress, and the American Jewish Committee. In an unanimous opinion handed down on 6 February 1963, the court concluded that the practice proscribed by the rule was not "commonly understood" to be included in the term "unfair dealing." The court also ruled that the action of the licensees forbidden by the rule could not be construed as state action and hence as forbidden by the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment.

Although successful in preventing the Michigan legislature from abolishing Rule 9, Governor Swainson was no more able during his single term of office (1961-1962) than Mennen Williams had been to persuade the Michigan lawmakers to adopt legislation to prohibit discrimination in publicly assisted housing. At the end of the Swainson governorship, Michigan thus not only lagged behind other states in terms of requiring open occupancy in publicly assisted housing, but by that time eight states had enacted fair housing laws that applied to nonpublicly assisted private housing to one degree or another.

Despite the lack of progress at the state government level, the Michigan State Advisory Committee to the United States Commission on Civil Rights did find some "signs of increasing citizen concern" about

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housing discrimination at the local level, where the discrimination problem was actually centered. In Ann Arbor, where realtors and managers of large rental units refused "to sell, lease, or rent" to blacks except in "certain predetermined areas," the vice president for student affairs at the University of Michigan appointed a committee on discrimination in off-campus housing on 5 May 1960 that adopted a policy of denying university services to owners or landlords who discriminated in the sale or rental of housing except for those who provided rooms in their own homes for not more than two students. The Ann Arbor Area Fair Housing Association staged a successful campaign in the summer of 1962 to desegregate the 422 rental apartments in nearby Pittsfield Village, and in September 1963 Ann Arbor became the first city in Michigan and the sixteenth in the nation to adopt a fair housing ordinance. Grand Rapids followed suit in December.24

In an effort to create an open housing market in the Detroit metropolitan area, local citizens, in May 1960, formed the "predominantly white" Greater Detroit Committee for Fair Housing Practices. In January 1962 the committee developed a "fair housing listing service," a register of property in the area available for sale or rental on an open occupancy basis as well as of minority group families who might be interested in buying or renting such property. It later initiated a project called "Operation Open Door" that was designed to encourage blacks to seek housing in outlying sections of the city and in the suburbs from which they had previously been excluded, and to provide them with escort teams when they sought to examine property in such locations. In an effort to demonstrate that there was "no 'safe' place for a bigot" to find housing in the Detroit metropolitan area, the committee also sought to persuade residents of Detroit and its suburbs to sign "Covenant Cards" indicating that they would welcome persons in their neighborhood regardless of their race, religion, or national origin. As of 24 April 1965, 3352 Detroiters and 994 suburban residents had

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signed the cards. All in all, however, the efforts of the Greater Detroit Committee attracted "very little support." The committee's endeavors were supplemented early in 1963 when Detroit's three major religious faiths, in cooperation with the Detroit Commission on Community Relations, sponsored the Metropolitan Conference on Open Occupancy. The conference "created a mood of interracial cooperation" in the city and led to the formation of an executive committee that called on the state's churches and synagogues to seek the enactment of a state fair housing law. 25

Supporters of fair housing in Detroit were fiercely opposed by numerous neighborhood associations and homeowners groups. For these organizations, composed of middle-class and working-class whites, including union members, "[t]he issues of race and housing were inseparable." Unwilling to adopt a fair housing ordinance, the Detroit Common Council enacted a Fair Neighborhood Practice Ordinance in 1962 that was to be enforced by the city's Commission on Community Relations. Designed to get at blockbusting, the ordinance restricted the number of realty signs, their location, and the length of time they could be displayed, and made it unlawful to refer to race in seeking property listings or in realty advertising. By July 1966 the commission had found 855 violations and had recommended twelve prosecutions, resulting in seven convictions. 26


A major step in the direction of fair housing was taken by Michigan voters in 1963 in approving Michigan's new constitution. Unlike the constitution of 1908 that it replaced, the 1963 constitution included a section on equal protection and discrimination. "No person," it stated, "shall be denied the equal protection of the laws; nor shall any person be denied the enjoyment of his civil or political rights or be discriminated against in the exercise thereof because of religion, race, color or national origin." The 1963 constitution also provided for the creation of a bipartisan civil rights commission, making Michigan the only state in the nation at that time to accord such a commission constitutional status. "It shall be the duty of the commission in a manner which may be prescribed by law," the constitution stated, "to investigate alleged discrimination against any person because of religion, race, color or national origin in the enjoyment of the civil rights guaranteed by law and by this constitution, and to secure the equal protection of such civil rights without such discrimination."\(^7\)

During the convention debates the delegates, on three separate occasions, defeated a proposal that read, "The right of the owner of real property to convey, grant, devise or control said property shall be limited only by general law. The legislature shall not delegate this power."\(^8\) Despite this vote there was nothing in the constitution or the laws of Michigan at that time that restricted the right of the owners of private property to dispose of that property as they saw fit. It thus came as a surprise to constitutional experts in the state and, it seems, to most convention delegates when Attorney General Frank Kelley, in a critically important opinion, ruled on 22 July 1963 that the Civil Rights Commission (CRC) created by the constitution had "plenary power in its sphere of authority to protect civil rights in the fields of employment, education, housing and public accommodations" and had "authority to enforce civil rights to purchase, mortgage, lease or rent private housing." Kelley based his opinion on his reading of the constitutional convention

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debates, court decisions, and the federal Civil Rights Act of 1866 as it applied to housing.29

The new Michigan constitution did not take effect until 1 January 1964. By that time George Romney, a moderate Republican, had completed his first year as Michigan’s governor. As a private citizen before becoming governor, Romney had proved himself a supporter of civil rights. He had opposed segregation in defense housing during World War II and in public housing in Detroit, and as president of American Motors had supported enactment of the Fair Employment Practices Act. As a delegate to the constitutional convention, he had been a staunch advocate of the civil rights sections of the new state constitution, asserting that he wanted Michigan to be “a leader in eliminating racial discrimination.” In the keynote address to the Metropolitan Conference on Open Occupancy, Romney declared that “a free and open housing market is a public responsibility and a private goal.”30

In his “state of the state” message a few days after his Metropolitan Conference talk, Romney listed housing discrimination as “[t]he most crucial and pressing problem” in civil rights and called for the enactment of a legislative version of Rule 9. When the Michigan Supreme Court the next month invalidated Rule 9, Romney, in a special message to the legislature, not only reiterated his call for legislation to incorporate the principle of the rule but also urged lawmakers to enact a measure embodying the chief features of Detroit’s Fair Neighborhood Practice Ordinance. The administration bill passed the Senate, in which the Republicans held a 23-11 majority, by a whopping 21-4 vote but died in the Republican-controlled House State Affairs Committee. “‘I didn’t care anything about it,’” declared the committee’s die-hard chairman,

29 Kelley Opinion, No. 4161, 22 July 1963, Box 2, Katherine Moore Cushman Papers, BHL. For criticism of the opinion, see William B. Caspillo to Dorothy Siegel Judd, 7 January 1964, Box 5, Richard C. Van Duinen Papers, BHL.; Paul Kamper to Judd, 20 July 1964, Box 4, Dorothy Siegel Judd Papers, BHL.; and Roger C. Crampton, “The Powers of the Michigan Civil Rights Commission: A Problem in Constitutional Interpretation,” [July 1964], Box 5, Tom Downe Papers, BHL.

Lloyd Gibbs of Portland, regarding the bill, "and there didn't seem to be anyone else who wanted it either."[31]

Since Kelley had ruled that the CRC had "plenary power" to protect civil rights in housing, including private housing, the Romney administration apparently saw no need to press for fair housing legislation once the commission began to operate on 1 January 1964. In line with the Kelley ruling, the CRC let it be known that it would accept, investigate, and seek to resolve all complaints regarding housing that were brought to its attention, including not only complaints against real-estate brokers but against private property owners as well. "Housing," the CRC declared soon after it assumed its responsibilities, is "the next frontier of the civil rights movement." "Regardless of whatever else is done," the CRC's executive director declared in April 1966, "if the basic patterns of housing segregation and discrimination are not broken[,] we are destined to live generation after generation in a divided society with all of its threats to freedom and the social order."[32]

The CRC from the start took the position that "mere enforcement of Constitutional and legal prohibitions against discrimination" would not in itself be sufficient "to assure adequate progress toward full and equal opportunity to participate in community life" for all citizens. What was needed, it maintained, was "positive, affirmative actions" by the leaders in different areas of American life as well as community support for these efforts. Insofar as housing was concerned, this meant that the CRC would seek to persuade members of the housing industry to agree voluntarily to follow a policy of open occupancy. Beginning with the Detroit Real Estate Board in October 1964, CRC commissioners or staff members met with local boards of realtors, brokers, and developers as well as with the Michigan Real Estate Association to encourage housing

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industrial members to assume leadership in the drive for open housing. At these meetings the CRC made it clear that its jurisdiction extended to "all housing."  

Following its meetings with the realtors, the CRC in March 1966 issued a set of guidelines to the housing industry. It advised industry boards and associations to agree among themselves to operate on a nondiscriminatory basis, display an "Equal Opportunity in Housing" sign in their places of business, instruct their personnel on "how to deal impartially with the public," conduct a program of education and information about nondiscriminatory housing, especially for new members, and employ "qualified minority group personnel" in their organizations. Local real-estate boards were specifically advised to grant membership to brokers who normally served the minority community, a rarity at the time. Apartment owners and managers were advised to advertise that their units were open to all on a nondiscriminatory basis and to maintain the same level of rents, service, and personnel after integration as before integration.

To "expose the anatomy of segregation and discrimination in housing," to inform the public and itself about the matter, and to "mobilize support" for the commission effort to create an open housing market, the CRC decided to hold a series of public hearings on the subject in different communities in the state. The commission held housing hearings in Saginaw in June 1966, Jackson in September 1966, Flint in November 1966, and Muskegon in April 1967. The hearings, the commission concluded, demonstrated that "a discriminatory housing market, coupled with sub-standard housing in negro sections, effectively prevented negro families from upgrading their living conditions." Saginaw, the CRC found, was "a severely segregated city"; Jackson exhibited "a clearly segregated pattern of housing typical of northern

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33CRC, The Year of the Beginning, 1964 Annual Report, 3, 10, newsletters, CRC, April, October 1965, release, CRC, 6 May [1965], Box 408, weekly report, Gordin to Commission, 23 October 1964, Box 92, Romney Papers; memorandum, James L. Rose to Gordin, 18 January 1965, Box 1, Education Division, A Report to the Michigan Civil Rights Commission, 22 April 1965, Box 32, RG 74-70; Detroit News, 26 April 1964.

34CRC to Builders et al., March 1966, Voluntary affirmative measures for the housing industry to achieve Equal Housing Opportunities, [file: 1966], Part 3, Box 19, DCCR Papers.
industrial cities”; and Flint was 94 percent segregated. The problem of segregation was intensified, the commission reported, by urban renewal projects and highway construction, which displaced nonwhites in particular, forcing them to relocate in a constricted housing market that denied them freedom of choice. This was partly because there was a shortage of housing open to blacks that they could afford to rent or buy. The CRC did not hold housing hearings in Detroit, but the effect of urban renewal projects and highway construction on housing segregation was painfully apparent in that city also, lending support to the assertion that “slum removal equals Negro removal.”

The “housing patterns” in the communities it studied, the CRC indicated, seemed to be “controlled by members of the real estate profession,” who claimed that they were simply following the discriminatory instructions of their clients, but who also refused on their own initiative to show property to blacks in white neighborhoods and declined to service open occupancy listings. Minorities, the commission found, also appeared to be victims of poor code enforcement. The CRC’s recommendations to the various communities in which it conducted hearings were roughly similar. It urged the communities to enact “comprehensive” fair housing ordinances; staff housing information centers to aid minority groups in securing housing without discrimination; create citizens advisory committees on housing to advise their respective cities regarding equal housing opportunities, relocation, and the supply of housing; increase the supply of “standard low cost housing” by one means or another; and seek ways to help families with low incomes and poor credit ratings to secure funding for housing.35

Its concern for the availability of housing on a nondiscriminatory basis led the CRC to deal with the relocation of those displaced by urban

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renewal projects and highway construction, public housing, the use of public funds in housing, and the protection against violence of blacks moving into white neighborhoods. The CRC’s objective regarding the displacement of families and individuals by urban renewal and highway construction was to ensure that blacks received equal treatment with whites in the appraisal of their property that was to be destroyed and that the housing available to the displaced did not “perpetuate or extend” discrimination and segregation.

On 24 October 1966 the CRC provided local officials with a set of relocation policies and guidelines that it wished them to follow. It recommended that the communities involved develop a “relocation plan” for their projects that specified the housing needs of those who were to be displaced and what housing would be available to meet those needs. It advised that projects should be “timed” so that suitable housing was available at the time the displacement occurred. The relocation agency in the community was to inform those being displaced of their right to obtain housing without discrimination on the basis of their race, color, religion, or national origin. To assure that minority group members being displaced received fair treatment, the CRC advised that arrangements be made for them to participate in “the programming and execution of relocation projects.” CRC regional officials sought to have the cities concerned apply the guidelines, and commission members and staff met with local officials to discuss such relocation matters as the availability of suitable housing for displaced minority group members.36

In line with the CRC recommendations, the Michigan legislature, toward the end of 1966, enacted a measure prohibiting the demolition of residential dwellings to make way for highway construction until the residents displaced by the action were provided with suitable housing elsewhere. The law also required the Highway Department to cooperate with local government officials in preparing a plan for relocation that

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had to be submitted to the State Administrative Board for approval. Following a meeting with the CRC in late April 1968, the Highway Department agreed to involve “citizen advisory councils” in the development and execution of highway relocation plans before they were submitted to the State Administrative Board. The state legislature also sought to ease the relocation problem by a 1966 law establishing a state Housing Development Authority whose “main thrust” was to provide low-cost housing for families displaced by highway construction and urban renewal projects.

The CRC intervened when it believed that public housing construction plans of one city or another appeared likely to “perpetuate or extend” segregation. Working with the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the CRC in 1965 persuaded Ypsilanti to abandon two public housing sites that the commission believed would increase segregation in the city. The commission had less success initially in dealing with Flint regarding a public housing site to which the CRC objected but that the Public Housing Administration had approved. In the end, however, HUD followed the commission’s recommendation regarding the matter. In January 1967 the CRC sent local government officials a set of public housing guidelines and policies that it had devised in consultation with the United States Public Housing Assistance Administration as well as a list of suggested measures to implement the guidelines. The commission recommended that local governments and public housing authorities should select public housing sites that would contribute to the desegregation of homes and schools. It noted that “the concept of ‘scattered sites’” and the “imaginative” use of federal housing programs such as rent supplements could help to achieve that purpose.

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It advised that communities assign applicants for public housing so as to achieve integration in each project. 38

The chief public housing issue with which the CRC dealt after it issued its public housing guidelines concerned the city of Detroit. When the director of the Detroit Housing Commission asked the CRC early in 1966 to review proposed sites in Detroit for one thousand public housing units, the CRC’s Housing Division concluded that the units were to be located in predominantly black areas and would further housing segregation in the city. The Housing Commission, in response, proposed sites outside predominantly black sections of the city, but the Common Council rejected some of the sites and failed to act on some of the others. The CRC turned to HUD secretary Robert Weaver in June 1968 to review the site selection in Detroit to determine if public funds were being used to contribute to segregation. In 1969, finally, the Housing Assistance Administration granted Detroit approval for one hundred homes in scattered sites, as the CRC desired. 39

Working with state and local officials, the CRC sought to protect blacks who moved into white neighborhoods against violence. When an interracial couple moved into Warren in June 1967, “a violent mob” of more than one hundred persons shouted threats at the couple, threw smoke bombs into their house, and broke some windows. The CRC responded by requesting the governor to instruct the State Police to deal with such situations in the future whenever local police were “unable or unwilling” to do so. It discussed the matter with officials in the United States attorney’s office and decided to contact local prosecuting attorneys regarding the prosecution of those committing acts of violence or property damage in such instances and to seek peace bonds from

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those threatening same. Following a meeting between the CRC and local officials and community leaders, the city of Warren appointed a special committee to coordinate efforts to reduce tensions in the subdivision where the violence had occurred.\(^4\)

A good deal of the CRC’s time regarding housing was taken up with the investigation and disposition of complaints of individuals that their civil rights in this area had been violated. Like the Fair Employment Practices Commission that it replaced, the CRC sought to deal with complaints by conciliation and persuasion. Only when that approach failed did it arrange for a public hearing that might be followed by an appropriate order to the defendant, an order subject to court review. The case-by-case approach was inevitably a slow one, leaving the complainant without relief for a long period of time if the complaint was justified. This led critics to prefer “pattern-centered approaches,” which were within the CRC’s power, to the individual case-by-case approach.\(^4\)

By the end of 1967, before the state’s fair housing law was enacted, the CRC had received 404 housing complaints, which constituted 11.2 percent of all the complaints it had received. Slightly more than three-fourths of the complaints involved the withholding of accommodations for allegedly discriminatory reasons. Sixty percent of the complaints related to discrimination in renting, and 39 percent involved the purchase of a home. Racial discrimination was the basis for about 90 percent of the housing complaints, as compared to 5.4 percent for national origin and 3.2 percent for religion.

Housing complainants had the highest occupational status and were the best educated among the complainants in the various areas of the CRC’s jurisdiction. Reflecting the existence of housing discrimination and segregation throughout the state, housing was the only civil rights area in the CRC’s jurisdiction in which there was an almost equal distribution of complaints in the Detroit metropolitan area and in outstate Michigan. Of the housing complaints, 42.1 percent were

\(^4\) CRC, Report of Progress, Box 422, Romney Papers; CRC Newsletter, July 1967, UMLL; CRC to Heads of Local Law Enforcement Agencies, 27 June 1965, Box 5, RG 74-90; CRC to Michigan Mayors et al., 27 June 1967, Part II, Box 19, DNAACP Papers.

dismissed for lack of sufficient evidence, 8.1 percent were withdrawn by the complainant, and 48.4 percent were satisfactorily adjusted. The remedies in the latter cases involved such matters as the sale or rental of the dwelling to the complainant if it was still available at the time of the adjustment or the sale or rental of a similar accommodation if available or the next vacancy in a similar accommodation.\textsuperscript{42}

Of the civil rights complaints before the Detroit riot that led to public hearings and court tests, one ended up in the Michigan Supreme Court. In \textit{Beech Grove Investment Company v. Civil Rights Commission}, the court ruled on 1 April 1968, by a 5-3 vote, that there was "a civil right to property both at common law and under the 1963 Michigan constitution where . . . that housing has been publicly offered for sale by one who is in the business of selling housing to the public." The decision, for the first time, placed the Michigan Supreme Court imprimatur on the Kelley-CRC view that the civil rights provisions of the 1963 Michigan constitution applied to the disposition of private property, at least under certain circumstances.\textsuperscript{43}

The key state agency in dealing with housing discrimination resulting from public housing, the relocation of nonwhites due to highway construction and urban renewal, and the complaints of individuals, the CRC was also responsible to a degree for stimulating local communities to adopt fair housing ordinances. The CRC's executive director indicated that the commission's hearings in particular increased public awareness of the problem of housing segregation and "stimulated developments" that led to some "affirmative steps toward open housing." In Saginaw, following the CRC's hearing there, the Board of Commerce agreed to a voluntary program of housing integration. Jackson adopted a fair housing ordinance in the same month that the CRC hearing was held in that city. Denounced, however, by the


Jackson Board of Realtors and white citizen groups, the ordinance was submitted to a referendum of the voters on 11 April 1967 and defeated by a vote of better than two to one. Muskegon adopted a fair housing ordinance in April 1967, and by the time of the Detroit riot in July, eight Michigan cities in all had followed the same route.  

The color line had also been broken in the Grosse Pointes before the Detroit riot. Prodded by the Grosse Pointe Human Relations Council, which had begun to function in 1960 and had been formally organized in 1964, the Grosse Pointe Real Estate Brokers Association agreed early in 1966 that its members would not refuse to show homes to blacks, and it accepted as fact that blacks would be living in the Pointes, but it would not sign a statement to that effect. On 19 July 1966 the first black family moved into Grosse Pointe Woods, the CRC having cooperated with the Grosse Pointe Human Relations Council to prepare the community for the move and having arranged with the Grosse Pointe police to deal with possible violence. The family was welcomed by some but opposed by others, including motorists who paraded in front of the house shouting ""Nigger, get out!"" Resistance, however, soon subsided and ""friendliness prevailed."" The Grosse Pointe Committee for Open Housing, formed in June 1966 and composed of representatives from each of the five Grosse Pointes, let it be known that it would assist minority group members seeking to obtain housing in the Pointes.

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45 Meeting, Grosse Pointe Human Relations Council Board of Directors, 1 March 1966, Box 2, Grosse Pointe Committee for Open Housing Papers, ALHUA; [CRC] to Residents of Grosse Pointe Woods, 23 July 1966, Box 25, Blair Moody Jr. to John Feltens and Damon Keith, 21 September 1966, Box 28, RG 74-90; Thomas E. Johnson to Andrew Teelaert, 22 July 1966, Box 16, Richard McGhee Papers, ALHUA; Grosse Pointe Committee for Open Housing, Statement of Aims and Purposes, 26 July 1966, Mrs. Andrew L. Brown and John J. Fortener to Friend, 1 August 1966, Box 7, Horace Gilmore Papers, ALHUA; Department of Housing Quarterly Report, July-September 1967, Box 63, DUL Papers; Cosseboom, Grosse Pointe, 6-7, 9, 48-57, 63.
Detroit was not among the cities that adopted fair housing ordinances before July 1967. Detroit, indeed, seemed to be moving in the opposite direction. The resistance to fair housing in the city was led by the Greater Detroit Homeowners Council, which claimed to represent forty homeowners' organizations and has been described as "a solidly white, bipartisan, antiliberal coalition." In September 1964 the Detroit electorate, by a vote of 136,671 to 111,994, approved an ordinance that the Homeowners Council had prepared and that was designed to preserve segregated neighborhoods. The voters rejected the advice of the Citizens for a United Detroit, an organization created to defeat the ordinance, whose honorary chairman was Mayor Jerome P. Cavanagh. The ordinance, however, did not go into effect because the Wayne County Circuit Court ruled it unconstitutional.46

The Detroit riot of July 1967 and the racial disturbances that it triggered elsewhere in the state, including Flint and Pontiac, swelled the number of Michigan cities with fair housing ordinances to fifteen by November 1967, the largest number in any state at that time, and to thirty-five by October 1968, including some of the Detroit suburbs that had been previously almost entirely white. The Detroit Common Council adopted a fair housing ordinance in November 1967. When opponents of the measure gathered enough signatures to force a referendum on the ordinance, United States District Court Judge Talbot Smith ruled in August 1968 that in view of federal and, by then, state law and court decisions, the matter was no longer one for Detroit voters to decide.47

Flint's city commission agreed to a fair housing ordinance in October 1967. It was to go into effect the next month, but a Committee to Repeal Forced Housing, "a pseudonym," according to a CRC regional official, "for the local [John] Birch Society," forced the measure to a

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47A Summary of Fair Housing Ordinances in Michigan, 31 March 1968, Box 13, RG 74-90; newsletter, CRC, November 1967, Box 13, Alex Pitch Papers, ALHUA; newsletter, CRC, November-December 1968, Box 70, DUL Papers; Fine, Violence, 429-30.
referendum. In balloting held on 20 February 1968 Flint became the first city in the nation in which the voters—by a thirty-vote margin in this instance—sustained a fair housing ordinance. Pontiac followed suit by also approving a fair housing ordinance by referendum. Grosse Pointe Farms, the largest of the Grosse Pointes, moved in the other direction, however, its residents rejecting a fair housing measure by a vote of 2271 to 1596 in an April 1969 referendum. By the early 1970s, nevertheless, a few blacks had purchased homes in the Pointes.48

Efforts at the state level to enact fair housing legislation proved unavailing until the racial turbulence in the summer of 1967 appeared to signal the need for legislative action to alleviate the condition of the state’s blacks. When Romney called a special session of the legislature following the Detroit riot, the New Detroit Committee—recently formed by leading business firms in the Detroit area to help deal with the city’s problems—sought to persuade the governor to put a fair housing law on the agenda. Romney had promised legislators, who had defeated fair housing proposals in both the 1964 and 1965 legislative sessions, that he would not seek such a measure in the special session.49 After returning to Lansing, however, from a national speaking tour in which he had stressed the need to deal with racial problems, “he was boxed in and could not say no” to New Detroit. He consequently delivered a message to the legislature on 13 October calling for a “statewide open occupancy law.” He also called for code enforcement legislation as well as a tenants’ rights law designed to create “a covenant of fitness, good repair and compliance with applicable health and safety laws and ordinances for every rental arrangement” in the state. He appraised the housing

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48 Newsletter, CRC, February-June 1968, UML; memorandum, Beasley to Commission, 23 February 1968, Box 6, RG 74-96; Detroit News, 26 April 1966; clipping, Lansing State Journal, 24 October 1967, Box 9, clipping, 20 February 1968, Box 4, RG Papers; newsletter, CRC, November-December 1968, Box 70, DUL Papers; Conselho, Grosse Pointe, 12-13, 17, 38.

49 “Fair Housing Legislation in Michigan,” n.d., Box 54, DUL Papers; Equal Housing Opportunities in Jackson . . . , 21, 22, 26 September 1966, Box 4, RG 74-90; Detroit News, 23 April 1966.
measures he had recommended as “the most important ever to be considered by the Michigan legislature.”

The Romney fair housing proposal caused three hundred Detroit homeowners to parade in front of the state capitol shouting “no forced housing” and “recall Romney.” Republican legislators were furious with the governor, claiming that his decision to push for fair housing would hurt the Republican party at the polls and would cause those legislators who supported open occupancy to lose their seats. In an effort to persuade the special session to follow the governor’s fair housing recommendation, a large delegation of New Detroit members, other influential Detroit citizens, and Mayor Jerome Cavanagh, in an unprecedented action, flew to Lansing to indicate by their “presence” their “personal conviction and willingness” to support an open housing law. The measure, however, was defeated in the House toward the end of December by a 47-55 vote, 33 Republicans and 22 Democrats opposing the bill and 21 Republicans and 26 Democrats supporting it. “I think what happened here is a disgrace,” declared Acting Governor William Milliken.

In his message on 11 January 1968 to the regular session of the legislature, Romney once again urged the enactment of fair housing and tenants’ rights legislation, declaring that these measures had become “the testing ground” since the Detroit riot. “If such legislation is passed,” he asserted, “it will strengthen those who seek peaceful, orderly changes. If it is not,” he warned, “it will accelerate the recruitment of revolutionary insurrectionists.” As the legislature debated a fair housing bill, Romney, who exerted far more leadership in the matter than he had in the 1967 special session, characterized “meaningful fair housing legislation” as

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50 Fine, Violence, 436; Romney “Special Message on Open Occupancy . . ., 13 October 1967,” Box 17, RG 74-90; Romney to Donald E. Dresselhouse, 17 November 1967, Box 171, Romney Papers; Jack Carper to Emanuel Muravehik, 8 December 1967, Box 41, Jewish Labor Committee Papers.

51 Lansing State Journal, 20 October, 26, 28 November, 2, 22, December 1967; clippings, Ann Arbor News, 23 October, 30 November, 7 December 1967, Box 9, RG Papers; Carper to Muravehik, 8 December 1967, Box 41, Jewish Labor Committee Papers.
"the single most important step the legislature can take to avert disorder in our cities." 52

The housing bill, which met the usual opposition from realtors, was strongly supported, among others, by religious groups, New Detroit, the Greater Detroit Board of Commerce, the Michigan Federation of Teachers, the American Association of University Women, and the Democratic State Central Committee. "[S]tronger" than the 1967 measure, the bill passed the Senate on 4 April by a 22-14 vote after what was described as "the bitterest struggle in years" on the Senate floor. The affirmative vote, which, not incidentally, followed the Beech Grove decision upholding the Kelley-CRC view of the state constitution, was evenly divided between Democrats and Republicans. The measure passed the House more than a month later by a 76-31 vote, 36 Democrats and 40 Republicans voting in the affirmative and 18 Democrats and 13 Republicans casting negative votes. After differences between the bills passed by the two houses had been reconciled, Romney signed the measure into law on 11 June 1968, calling the action "One of the truly significant moments in the social development" of the state. 53

The Michigan Fair Housing Act forbade owners, real-estate brokers, and salesmen from refusing to negotiate a real-estate transaction or to discuss "the terms, conditions or privileges of a real estate transaction" with any person because of her or his race, color, religion, or national origin. The act made it an unfair housing practice for a financial institution to discriminate for the same reasons against any person applying for financial assistance in connection with a real-estate transaction. Blockbusting was also categorized as an unfair housing practice. If the CRC found a licensed real-estate broker, salesman, or builder engaging in an unfair housing practice, it was to certify this fact


to the licensing agency, which was bound by the decision and was authorized to revoke or suspend the license of the guilty party. The measure was to be enforced by the CRC, the state attorney general, or the aggrieved party, with the respondent having the right of appeal to a state circuit court within fifteen days of receiving notice of a CRC hearing. The CRC could petition a state circuit court to award a complainant not more than $500 for economic damages suffered as the result of housing discrimination. The court could also fine a respondent not more than $1000 for an unfair housing practice and not more than $2000 for violating a CRC housing order. Local governments were authorized to adopt fair housing ordinances not in conflict with the state law.

There were four exceptions to the applicability of the law: the rental of housing in a building containing accommodations for not more than two parties living independently of each other if the owner, lessor, or a member of the owner or lessor’s family resided in one of the units; the rental of a room or rooms in a single-family dwelling if the owner or lessor or a family member resided there; the sale or rental by the owner or lessor of housing accommodations in a building that contained housing for not more than two families living independently of each other that was not publicly listed or advertised for sale or lease; and rental housing for not more than twelve months by the owner or lessor when it had been occupied by him or her and maintained as his or her home for at least three months immediately preceding its occupation by the tenant and temporarily vacated while the owner or lessor maintained legal residence.54

Despite these exceptions, the Michigan Fair Housing Act, which took effect on 15 November 1968, was stronger than the federal fair housing law passed that same year and than just about all of the existing state fair housing acts. It is probably more than a coincidence that the state that had experienced the most severe racial disorder of the 1960s also adopted one of the strongest state fair housing acts. The CRC made every effort to publicize the law, meeting with members of the real-estate

industry and sponsoring a statewide conference to consider the legislation. It called on members of the housing industry to take affirmative action "beyond the requirements of the law" that would "break down racial barriers" in housing. Reacting to the United States Supreme Court decision on 17 June 1968 in the Jones v. Mayer case that the Civil Rights Act of 1866 permitted no exceptions on the basis of race insofar as housing discrimination was concerned, the CRC, which had filed an amicus brief in the case, pressed to have the Michigan law conform to the new federal standard. Nothing was done in this regard, however, until 1976, when the new Michigan Civil Rights Act omitted from the 1968 exceptions to the fair housing requirements of the law the sale or rental by the owner or lessor of housing accommodations in a building that contained housing for not more than two families living independently of each other that was not publicly listed or advertised for sale. Although racial segregation remained very high, it may be that the state, Detroit, and Detroit suburban housing measures contributed for a time to decreasing residential segregation in the central city and in Detroit's suburbs. From 1960 to 1980 in any event, the index of dissimilarity, which would have been 100 had there been total housing segregation, fell from 80.4 to 67.4 in the central city and, very modestly, from 89.8 to 83.9 in the Detroit suburbs.55

The same 1968 legislative session that produced the Fair Housing Act also resulted in the enactment of important relocation, tenants' rights, and code enforcement legislation. The relocation statute provided that district areas were to be designated for all "development areas," and citizens district councils of ten to twenty-five members that to "the maximum extent possible" were to be "representative of the residents of the area and of other persons with a demonstrable or substantial interest in the area" were to be appointed for each. The local officials responsible for preparing the development plan were to seek the advice of the

relevant citizens’ district council regarding “all aspects of the plan, including the development of new housing for relocation purposes.” This met a CRC objective regarding the displacement and relocation of minority persons.  

The several tenants’ rights and code enforcement measures provided that the lessor or licensee of residential premises had to agree formally that the premises were “fit for use” and had to keep them in “reasonable repair.” A board of tenant affairs was to be established in each unit of local government with a housing commission that operated one or more housing projects, one-half of the board to be elected from among tenants occupying the projects. The board was to advise the housing commission, review its rules and, if necessary, veto them by a two-thirds vote, and serve as a board of review for tenants or applicants for the housing units. These were “the strongest set” of such measures in the nation at that time.  

In the spring of 1967 the National Committee against Discrimination in Housing “commended” the CRC as “having a national impact not only in the public housing field but also in governmentally financed housing renewal and development programs.” The enactment the next year of fair housing, tenants’ rights, code enforcement, and relocation legislation placed Michigan, which had once lagged in the field, at the forefront of the states seeking to combat housing discrimination. The civil rights commitment of the post-1948 Michigan Democratic party, the persistent efforts of the CRC, the pressure of religious and liberal groups, racial trouble in Detroit and elsewhere in Michigan, and a moderate Republican governor able to secure bipartisan support for measures he favored all helped to make fair housing the law of the state

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58 Gordin to Hill, 5 May 1967, Box 3, Wheeler Papers.
of Michigan. At the same time, the long struggle for fair housing legislation revealed the strength of opposition to liberal reforms of this sort not just among realtors but also among middle-class and working-class whites, including union members.

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David William Winder, "Gubernatorial-Legislative Interaction in Michigan" (Ph.D. dist., Michigan State University, 1982), 151, 154-55