



Editorial: Discrimination in housing still exists; Laws, advocates remain necessary

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To most of us, the concept may seem like a relic of decades past, but housing discrimination still happens. And it's not always based on race.

Two recent court settlements demonstrate the persistence of the problem - and the importance of continuing to fight it.

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The Fair Housing Center of Southeastern Michigan recorded 93 complaints from Washtenaw County last year. About 13 percent - including the two recent settlements - were based on family status.

In those two cases, landlords settled claims that they had discriminated against families with children who were trying to rent apartments. One claim brought a \$20,000 settlement; the other, \$15,000. The Fair Housing Center assisted in both cases.

The settlements show that housing discrimination continues to be an issue, and that it can take more forms than one might think. Fair-housing laws, unfortunately, still need to be enforced in today's society. Groups like the Fair Housing Center are needed just as much to help victims apply those laws. Maybe someday "housing discrimination" will become an outdated term, but we're not there yet.

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