



For Immediate Release

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Civil Rights Organizations Accuse Deutsche Bank, Ocwen Financial, and Altisource of Housing Discrimination in 30 Metropolitan Areas

National Fair Housing Alliance and 19 Fair Housing Organizations Charge Deutsche Bank and its Preservation Maintenance Companies with Housing Discrimination based on Race and National Origin

Today, the National Fair Housing Alliance (NFHA) announced that it has found substantial new evidence in support of allegations that Deutsche Bank, Ocwen Financial, and Altisource continue to discriminate against communities of color in 30 metropolitan areas throughout the United States. NFHA has filed an amended administrative complaint with the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). NFHA alleges that Deutsche Bank AG, Deutsche Bank National Trust, Deutsche Bank Trust Company Americas, Ocwen Financial Corporation, and Altisource Portfolio Solutions, Inc. fail to provide required routine maintenance on bank-owned homes in middle- and working-class African American and Latino neighborhoods, while Deutsche/Ocwen/Altisource consistently provide routine maintenance on similar bank-owned homes in white neighborhoods.

Poorly maintained bank-owned properties create a harmful and dangerous environment for the local community. They also drive down the property value of homes owned by neighbors—causing the overall community to be economically depressed. The practice of neglecting bank-owned properties in African American and Latino communities increases the economic divide, perpetuates segregation, and denies the people who live in these communities the right to fair and safe housing.

NFHA filed its original complaint against Deutsche Bank, et al. on February 26, 2014. Deutsche Bank contracts with Ocwen and Altisource to provide preservation maintenance and marketing for the overwhelming majority of properties for which the Bank is listed as owner of record.

Nineteen fair housing organizations joined NFHA in filing this administrative complaint. The evidence presented in this complaint includes approximately 30,000 photographs of Deutsche Bank-owned homes in communities of color and predominantly white neighborhoods in 30

metropolitan areas. This [substantial photographic evidence](#) shows a stark pattern of discriminatory conduct in the maintenance of bank-owned homes in communities of color.

View photos of the properties at <http://nationalfairhousing.org/deutsche-property-photos/>.

“The Dayton area continues struggle with poorly maintained and marketed REO properties,” said Jim McCarthy, President/CEO of the Miami Valley Fair Housing Center. “These properties drag down property values, and destabilize neighborhoods,” McCarthy continued. “Lenders need to be accountable to our communities for the devastation that this neglect is causing.”

NFHA asserts that Deutsche Bank’s properties in predominantly white working- and middle-class neighborhoods are far more likely to have the lawns mowed and edged regularly, invasive weeds and vines removed, windows and doors secured or repaired, litter and trash removed, leaves raked, and graffiti erased from the property. “Yet, Deutsche Bank-owned homes in predominantly middle- and working-class African American and Latino neighborhoods are more likely to be left neglected with debris and trash on the property, wildly overgrown grass, and invasive plants covering the yards. Windows and doors are often unsecured, left wide open, or boarded, and graffiti as well as dead animals are left on the premises,” said Shanna Smith, President and CEO of NFHA.

Smith added, “Poor maintenance destroys a home’s curb appeal and invites vandalism or squatters because the home appears to be abandoned. Also, the blight caused by this neglect results in declining home values for African American and Latino families who live nearby, deepening the racial wealth gap and inequality in America.”

Poorly maintained bank-owned properties have a negative effect on the health of a local community. According to a report by Mariana Arcaya, Sc.D., M.C.P, of the American Heart Association, living near a foreclosed home can increase a person’s blood pressure “due in part to unhealthy stress from residents’ perception that their own properties are less valuable, their streets less attractive or safe and their neighborhoods less stable.”

Windows, doors, and holes left open, unsecured, or broken at vacant bank-owned properties allow for water to accumulate and stagnate. As a result, Deutsche Bank’s poorly maintained homes serve as the perfect environment for mold and discoloration to develop. In fact, a recent study conducted by Midwest Aerobiology Labs found 36 molds specific to foreclosed homes and also concluded that 88 percent of foreclosed homes contained a dangerous mold capable of causing childhood asthma and other diseases in humans.

Stagnant water and overgrown grass were frequent issues at homes for which Deutsche Bank is the owner of record, in African American and Latino neighborhoods. These provide a fertile habitat for mosquitos, rodents, termites, roaches, and other pests. These pests often carry diseases such as Zika and Hantavirus and present serious health risks to nearby residents. These vermin infestations commonly spread to nearby homes.

"Just imagine the health impact the families in communities of color experience living near these poorly maintained Deutsche Bank homes," said Smith. “By neglecting their properties, Deutsche

Bank, Ocwen, and Altisource are putting at risk the health of African American and Latino residents living near these properties.”

This isn't a new problem for Deutsche Bank. In June 2013, Deutsche Bank settled a lawsuit with the City of Los Angeles for \$10 million after it was accused of allowing hundreds of bank-owned properties to fall into slum conditions, leading to the destabilization of communities. “It's my understanding that Deutsche Bank required its preservation maintenance companies to pay most of the \$10 million to resolve that case, so you would expect Deutsche/Ocwen/ Altisource to monitor maintenance to ensure these shameful, discriminatory practices of neglecting routine maintenance in middle/working class communities of color ended. Unfortunately, we still find these horrid conditions at too many bank-owned homes in communities of color,” said Smith.

View a map of affected communities at <http://nationalfairhousing.org/community-map/>.

Below is a list of the 30 metro areas involved in the investigation:

Baltimore, MD	Memphis, TN
Baton Rouge, LA	Miami, FL
Chicago, IL	Milwaukee, WI
Cleveland, OH	Minneapolis, MN
Columbus, OH	Muskegon, MI
Dallas, TX	New Orleans, LA
Dayton, OH	Orlando, FL
Denver, CO	Philadelphia, PA
Detroit, MI (suburban communities)	Prince George's County, MD/Washington, DC
Gary, IN	Providence, RI
Grand Rapids, MI	Richmond, VA
Greater Palm Beaches, FL	Tampa, FL
Hampton Roads, VA	Toledo, OH
Hartford, CT	Richmond/Vallejo, CA
Indianapolis, IN	
Kansas City, MO	

The fair housing organizations joining NFHA in filing the complaint include:

HOPE Fair Housing Center 202 W. Willow Ave, Suite 203 Wheaton IL 60185	Homewood, IL 60430
Open Communities 614 Lincoln Avenue Winnetka, IL 60093	Housing Opportunities Made Equal of Virginia 626 East Broad Street #400 Richmond, VA 23219
South Suburban Housing Center 18220 Harwood Avenue	Toledo Fair Housing Center 432 North Superior Street Toledo, OH 43604

Fair Housing Continuum
4760 N US Highway 1, Suite 203
Melbourne, FL 32935

Greater New Orleans Fair Housing Action
Center
404 S Jefferson Davis Pkwy
New Orleans, LA 70119

Denver Metro Fair Housing Center
3280 Downing Street, Suite B
Denver CO 80205

Metropolitan Milwaukee Fair Housing
Council
759 N Milwaukee Street, Suite 500
Milwaukee, WI 53202

Fair Housing Center of West Michigan
20 Hall Street SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49507

The Miami Valley Fair Housing Center
505 Riverside Drive
Dayton, OH 45405

Housing and Research & Advocacy Center

Fair Housing Advocates of Northern California
1314 Lincoln Avenue, Suite A
San Rafael, CA 94901

2728 Euclid Avenue, Suite 200
Cleveland, OH 44115

Fair Housing Center of the Greater Palm
Beaches
1300 W Lantana Road, Suite 200
Lantana, FL 33462

Fair Housing Center of Central Indiana
445 N. Pennsylvania Street, Suite 811
Indianapolis, IN 46204

Central Ohio Fair Housing Association
175 South 3rd Street, Suite 580
Columbus, OH 43215

Housing Opportunities Project for
Excellence, Inc.
11501 NW 2nd Avenue
Miami, FL 33168

Connecticut Fair Housing Center
221 Main Street, 4th Floor
Hartford, CT 06106

North Texas Fair Housing Center
8625 King George Drive, Suite 130
Dallas TX 75235

NFHA and its member agencies are represented by Relman, Dane & Colfax PLLC and Soule, Bradtke & Lambert.

Detailed statistics and photos are available at www.nationalfairhousing.org.

The Fair Housing Act makes it illegal to discriminate based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability, or familial status, as well as the race or national origin of residents of a neighborhood. This law applies to housing and housing-related activities, which include the maintenance, appraisal, listing, marketing, and selling of homes.

[National Fair Housing Alliance](#)

Founded in 1988, the National Fair Housing Alliance is a consortium of more than 220 private, non-profit fair housing organizations, state and local civil rights agencies, and individuals from throughout the United States. Headquartered in Washington, D.C., the National Fair Housing Alliance also provides comprehensive fair housing education, advocacy and enforcement programs.

[Miami Valley Fair Housing Center](#)

The Miami Valley Fair Housing Center is a private non-profit corporation based in Dayton, Ohio with a mission to eliminate housing discrimination and ensure equal housing opportunity for all people in our region, the State of Ohio, and nationally. The Fair Housing Center works to educate the public about housing discrimination laws, discriminatory housing practices, and the availability of legal remedies for such discriminatory practices. MVFHC also provides counseling, investigative, and referral services to the public.