



For Immediate Release

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National Fair Housing Alliance

National and Local Fair Housing Organizations Accuse Deutsche Bank, Ocwen Financial and Altisource of Housing Discrimination

National Fair Housing Alliance and South Suburban Housing Center Present Evidence of Housing Discrimination Against Mortgage Lender and its Preservation Maintenance Companies for Practices in Gary and Lake County.

Today, the National Fair Housing Alliance (NFHA) of Washington, D.C., South Suburban Housing Center (SSHC) of Homewood, Illinois, and eighteen other fair housing organizations across the country revealed new evidence of housing discrimination by Deutsche Bank, Ocwen Financial and Altisource. The complaint alleges that this national mortgage lender and its servicers failed to provide routine maintenance on foreclosed homes in middle- and working-class African American and Latino communities and neighborhoods, while consistently providing better maintenance of similar foreclosed properties in white communities and neighborhoods.

Poorly maintained foreclosed 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 foreclosed properties in African American and Latino communities increases the economic divide, perpetuates segregation, and denies people within these communities the right to fair and safe housing.

Shanna Smith, NFHA President and CEO observed, “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.”

The administrative complaint filed with the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) adds Ocwen and Altisource as respondents because Deutsche Bank uses these companies to provide preservation maintenance and marketing for the overwhelming majority of properties where the Bank is listed as owner of record. Nationally, 1,100 Deutsche Bank properties have been investigated with approximately 30,000 photographs taken to support the allegations. The analysis of this substantial photographic evidence shows a stark pattern of discriminatory conduct in the maintenance of foreclosed homes in communities of color.

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

SSHC investigated 22 Deutsche Bank properties from 2013-2015 in Gary and surrounding Lake County communities. John Petruszak, Executive Director of SSHC stated, “The lack of maintenance of Deutsche Bank’s Gary properties has increased dangerous health issues and continued to lower property values, stagnating chances for recovery in distressed neighborhoods.”

Power point presentations containing the details and photographs of the Gary and Chicago area Deutsche Bank owned properties investigated by SSHC, has been posted on its website: www.southsuburbanhousingcenter.org.

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

Highlights of Significant Racial Disparities Found in the Gary Area Investigations:

- 77.8 percent of Deutsche Bank properties in communities of color had **trash or debris** on the premises, while only 38.5 percent of the properties in White communities had the same problem.
- 88.9 percent of Deutsche Bank properties in communities of color had **a broken, boarded, or unsecured window**, while only 30.8 percent of properties in White communities had the same problem.
- 44.4 percent of Deutsche Bank properties in communities of color had **unsecured, broken, or boarded doors**, while only 23.1 percent of the properties in White communities had the same problem.
- 66.7 percent of Deutsche Bank properties in communities of color had **overgrown grass or dead leaves**, while only 15.4 percent of the properties in White communities had the same problem.

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The National Fair Housing Alliance

Founded in 1988, the National Fair Housing Alliance is a consortium of more than 220 private, nonprofit 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.

South Suburban Housing Center

SSHC is the private, non-profit, regional fair housing and housing counseling agency primarily serving over 100 communities in southern Cook, Will and Kankakee counties of Illinois since 1975. SSHC's Fair Housing Enforcement Services extend to Grundy and Iroquois Counties in Illinois, Lake County, Indiana, and several central Illinois cities. SSHC's current Fair Housing Enforcement and Housing Counseling programs assist individuals in all protected classes and ensure that housing providers recognize and comply with the fair housing laws.

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