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TO: The Honorable Detroit City Council

FROM: David Whitaker, Director 
Legislative Policy Division Staff

DATE: July 5, 2023

**RE: RESOLUTION SUPPORTING PROPOSED LEGISLATION BANNING SOURCE
OF INCOME DISCRIMINATION**

Council Member Angela Whitfield Calloway requested that the Legislative Policy Division (LPD) draft a resolution supporting proposed legislation banning source of income discrimination in Michigan.

Please contact us if we can be of any further assistance.

BY COUNCIL MEMBER ANGELA WHITFIELD CALLOWAY

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING PROPOSED LEGISLATION BANNING SOURCE OF INCOME DISCRIMINATION

- WHEREAS,** Under the Fair Housing Act, the federal government prohibits discrimination in housing because of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status, and disability; and
- WHEREAS,** Current federal housing discrimination laws do not prevent landlords from discriminating against tenants who receive income from government subsidy programs like Social Security, housing vouchers, or veterans benefits, nor does it protect individuals who receive income from a contract, legal settlement, or child support; and
- WHEREAS,** Currently, 19 states and the District of Columbia have passed laws prohibiting source of income discrimination in housing, and 9 cities in Michigan have passed ordinances prohibiting source of income discrimination; and
- WHEREAS,** The City of Detroit also has an ordinance which prohibits housing discrimination based on “public benefit status” for individuals who are recipients of public benefit programs; and
- WHEREAS,** The Michigan Legislature has recently introduced House Bills 4062-4063 and Senate Bills 205-207 which, if passed, would prohibit source of income discrimination across the state of Michigan; and
- WHEREAS,** Under the proposed laws, “source of income” explicitly includes “benefits or subsidy programs including housing assistance, public assistance, emergency rental assistance, veterans benefits, Social Security, supplemental security income or other retirement programs, and other programs administered by any federal, state, local, or nonprofit entity”; and
- WHEREAS,** In Michigan, an estimated 225,000 households rely on federal housing assistance, according to the nonpartisan Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, including 53,900 who receive housing choice vouchers; and
- WHEREAS,** Advocates of the legislation say that in many Michigan communities, it is difficult for recipients of state and federal housing vouchers to find rental housing because of discrimination by landlords despite the fact that housing vouchers are a reliable and consistent form of income; and
- WHEREAS,** Because recipients of Section 8 housing vouchers have only 60 days to locate a place to live before the voucher expires, the prevalence of landlords who refuse to accept vouchers makes it very challenging for many voucher recipients to secure housing in the limited time period; and
- WHEREAS,** The housing voucher process often takes years and can be difficult to navigate for individuals who are homeless or housing insecure¹, therefore discrimination based on source of income is an unnecessary additional barrier that inhibits the effectiveness of

¹ <https://www.freep.com/story/news/local/michigan/detroit/2023/03/12/michigan-housing-program-waiting-list-has-thousands-of-people-on-it/69790526007/>

programs meant to alleviate homelessness and housing insecurity in our communities by turning away individuals who rightfully qualify; **NOW THEREFORE BE IT**

RESOLVED, The Detroit City Council urges the Michigan Legislature to pass House Bills 4062-4063 and Senate Bills 205-207 which, if passed, would prohibit source of income discrimination across the state of Michigan; **THEREFORE, BE IT FINALLY**

RESOLVED, That the Detroit City Clerk is directed to send this resolution to the Detroit delegations of both the Michigan State House and Senate, in addition to Governor Gretchen Whitmer.