



This year we celebrate the 50th anniversary and the spirit behind the original passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1968, which expanded on previous acts in the Civil Rights Act of 1964 by prohibiting discrimination concerning the sale, rental and financing of housing based on race, religion, national origin, sex, (and as amended) handicap and family status. The enactment of the federal Fair Housing Act on April 11, 1968, came only after a long and difficult journey. From 1966 to 1967, Congress regularly considered the fair housing bill but failed to garner a strong enough majority for its passage. However, when the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was assassinated on April 4, 1968, President Lyndon Johnson utilized this national tragedy to urge for the bill's speedy Congressional approval. President Johnson viewed the Act as a fitting memorial to Dr. King who had been closely associated with the fair housing legislation since the 1966 open house marches in Chicago.

Another significant issue during this time period was the growing casualty list from Vietnam. Even though casualties fell heaviest upon young, poor African-American and Hispanic infantrymen, on the home front their families could not purchase or rent homes in certain residential developments because of their race or national origin. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the National Association of Real Estate Brokers (NAREB), the GI Form, and the National Committee Against Discrimination in Housing lobbied hard for the Senate to pass the Fair Housing Act and remedy this inequity. Massachusetts Senators Edward Kennedy and Edward Brooke argued greatly for the passage of this legislation. Senator Brooke, the first African-American ever to be elected to the Senate by popular vote personally spoke of his inability to provide a home of his choice for his family when he returned from World War II, because of his race.

In recognition of National Fair Housing Month, our agency is hosting a Resource Fair on Tuesday, April 24th from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Alhambra Main Office, located at 700 W. Main Street in the City of Alhambra and on Thursday, April 26th from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Antelope Valley Office, located at 2323 E. Palmdale Blvd, Suite B, in the City of Palmdale. This Resource Fair will provide clients and the public with information regarding programs offered by our agency, such as the Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Program and Homeless Incentive Program (HIP). In addition, representatives from local agencies, such as the Department of Consumer Affairs and the Housing Rights Center will be available to provide information about the array of services available to County residents and answer questions about housing laws and consumer rights. This event is free, everyone is welcome.