**STATEMENT FROM**

**THE ASSOCIATION FOR NEIGHBORHOOD & HOUSING DEVELOPMENT, INC.**

**OPPOSING THE NOMINATION OF**

**DR. BENJAMIN CARSON FOR THE POSITION OF**

**SECRETARY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT**

January 11, 2017

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer

The Honorable Kirsten G. Gillibrand

United States Senate Committee on Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs

Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Schumer and Senator Gillibrand:

The Association for Neighborhood & Housing Development, Inc. urges you to reject the nomination of Dr. Benjamin Carson for the position of Secretary of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Created in 1965, HUD’s mission is “to create strong, sustainable, inclusive communities and quality affordable homes for all.” We strongly share in and support HUD’s mission as it align closely with ANHD’s mission to ensure flourishing neighborhoods and decent, affordable housing for all New Yorkers.

We consider Dr. Carson completely unqualified to anticipate or promote appropriate solutions to the pressing housing and urban development needs facing our country and the State of New York.

Deeply alarming is Dr. Carson’s position on the Fair Housing Act of 1968, which prohibited discrimination based on race, religion, national origin, sex, (and as amended) handicap and family status concerning the sale, rental, and financing of housing. In an Op-Ed in the *Washington Times*, Carson dismissed fair housing enforcement by HUD as “a mandated social-engineering scheme.”

Furthermore Dr. Carson has dismissed the very real circumstances of poverty saying “poverty is really more of a choice than anything else.” Research has repeatedly shown poverty’s connection to and deep impact on housing access and affordability. For the lowest income households in the U.S., the share of income devoted to rent increased from an already alarming 55.7 percent to a staggering 62.5 percent. Likewise lower middle-class households saw their rent burdens climb from 27 percent up to 30 percent, putting their rents dangerously close to being unaffordable and less likely to be sustainable.

Housing is an extremely complex issue. It requires an in-depth understanding of real estate markets, labor markets, housing finance, economics, land use planning, taxes, transportation, energy, health, education, and more. While Dr. Carson has had an established career in the medical field, the same cannot be said for housing or urban planning and development. Dr. Carson has no prior experience with housing or development programs and policies, nor does he have any experience in the public sector or running a large scale government agency.

We believe that the appointment of Dr. Carson would severely jeopardize millions of homes across the U.S. and the livelihoods of nearly 600,000 New York City residents. We strongly urge you to decline to confirm Dr. Benjamin Carson for the position of Secretary of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Thank you for your consideration.

Benjamin Dulchin

Executive Director