

EXHIBIT C

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF MARYLAND**

**CARMEN THOMPSON, *et al.*,
Plaintiffs,**

v.

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF
HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, *et al.*,
Defendants.**

Civil Action No. MJG-95-309

**DECLARATION OF CONGRESSMAN ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS
IN SUPPORT OF SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT**

1. Although I make this Declaration in my personal rather than official capacity, I note for the record in these proceedings that I currently represent the citizens of Maryland's Seventh Congressional District in the United States House of Representatives. I have had the honor and pleasure to serve in that capacity since 1996. Among other Committee assignments, I presently serve as the ranking minority member of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, and I also am a senior member of the House Transportation Committee and a member of the Joint Economic Committee of the Senate and the House.
2. I wish to commend the United States Department of Housing & Urban Development, the City of Baltimore, the Housing Authority of the City of Baltimore, and the Plaintiff Class in this case for reaching a Settlement Agreement that can serve as a model for making real the noble goals of the Fair Housing Act of 1968, passed in the aftermath of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s assassination as a tribute to the work and legacy of that great civil rights hero.
3. Recognizing that evaluation and approval of the Settlement Agreement is, properly, within the discretion and authority of this Honorable Court, I recognize the value of the Settlement Agreement and, in so expressing my opinion, following the example of another civil rights hero – my predecessor, the late Honorable Parren Mitchell, who submitted testimony in support of an earlier Partial Consent Decree in this case. Like Congressman Mitchell, I recognize that the Baltimore Housing Mobility Program, which this Settlement Agreement will support and continue, should be supported because it permits many poor African Americans to have the same choices about where to raise their children as others in the Baltimore Region – a truly empowering consequence of this litigation.

4. I applauded this Court's 2005 ruling recognizing that a regional approach to fair housing is essential to overcoming the Baltimore Region's legacy of segregation and the government policies that contributed to it. This Settlement Agreement is a significant step forward toward remedying the Fair Housing Act violations that the Court has found.
5. Critically, the Settlement Agreement will provide needed resources to continue the successful and nationally recognized Baltimore Housing Mobility Program, launched under the prior Partial Consent Decree in this case. That Program already has assisted more than 1,800 families who have voluntarily chosen to live in better neighborhoods that offer improved educational and economic opportunities. The Baltimore Housing Mobility Program provides these families the assistance they need to live closer to their jobs and to find neighborhoods with better schools. I have been advised that each family that chooses to participate receives a Housing Choice Voucher, high-quality housing and credit counseling, and support with the transition to their new neighborhood. In those new neighborhoods, participants overwhelmingly report that they feel safer, healthier, and more confident about the future facing their children. The continued Program under the Settlement Agreement will provide vouchers and high-quality counseling to assist up to 2,600 additional families to move to Communities of Opportunity.
6. The Baltimore Housing Mobility Program is a sound investment. Its benefits are not limited to families who participate. Rather, the program strengthens the entire Baltimore Region. Indeed, many families eligible to participate in the Baltimore Housing Mobility Program are already working in new jobs as nursing assistants, school bus drivers, and in other jobs critical to our Region's economy.
7. The inspiring stories of participants in the Baltimore Housing Mobility Program echo my own family's journey decades ago when we were able to move from an impoverished neighborhood, near where the Ravens' stadium has since been built to a community of far greater opportunity in Edmondson Village in West Baltimore. That move opened my eyes to a better world. We were the first Black family on our street, and I had the opportunity to attend integrated and high-quality public schools where I was inspired to excel. It is not an exaggeration to say that the housing moves that my family made were critical to the tremendous opportunities I have had in my life, culminating in my service to the people of Maryland in the practice of law, the Maryland Legislature and the United States House of Representatives. It is my hope and belief that the Settlement Agreement in this case will provide similar opportunities to thousands of families.

I, **ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS**, hereby declare that the foregoing is my true act and deed, and I affirm, under penalty of perjury, that the matters and facts set forth herein are true and correct to be best of my knowledge, information and belief.

Dated: November 15, 2012
Baltimore, Maryland


The Honorable Elijah E. Cummings