Blockbusting

FAIR HOUSING HIGHLIGHT #4

What is "blockbusting"?

"Blockbusting" or "panic selling" is an illegal and discriminatory practice. It is characterized by using tactics to induce a person to sell their home by persuading them that the entry of persons of a particular race, color, religion, sex, familial status, national origin or disability into their neighborhoods will negatively affect the community and decrease the value of their homes.

Why is "blockbusting" detrimental?

Blockbusting destroys neighborhoods by stripping them of their social and economic stability. Blockbusting perpetuates segregation and discrimination, which in turn encourages capital flight and increases poverty. The end result is monetary loss to the homeowner, economic instability and loss of the opportunity to live in racially and ethnically diverse neighborhoods.

What are some indicators of "blockbusting"?

Common signs of blockbusting are repeated solicitations from a realtor asking if you have thought about selling your home, investors offering quick cash for your property, realtors calling you directly and asking if you have noticed the number of minorities moving in lately, or rumors circulating about plummeting property values. Also, key phrases might be "undesirable elements are moving in" or references to "bad schools" or "changing neighborhoods" due to racial or ethnic composition.

What can I do if I think that "blockbusting" is occurring in my neighborhood?

If you feel that you and your neighborhood are being threatened by blockbusting practices, make sure that the proper agencies are notified. First, call the Fair Housing Rights Center to report the problem, report the problem to HUD and file a Fair Housing complaint. Blockbusting is illegal!

Questions? Call the Fair Housing Rights Center in Southeastern Pennsylvania at 215 576-7711 or visit us online at www.fairhousingrights.org.

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