

Senator Scott Brown

“Ending Housing Discrimination Against Servicemembers and Veterans Act of 2012”

“American heroes deserve the same protection from housing discrimination as any other group. Our servicemembers and veterans should be welcomed home, not discriminated against because of their brave service.”

- Senator Scott Brown

Fair Housing Act was intended to prevent discrimination in the housing market

The Fair Housing Act was signed into law by President Lyndon B. Johnson in 1968 and was last amended in 1988. Former Massachusetts Senator Edward Brooke was an original co-sponsor of the Act. The FHA prevents discrimination in advertisements, offers, contract conditions, and agreements for housing on the account of race, color, religion, sex, familial status, or national origin.

Federal housing laws lack protections for veterans and military servicemembers

Currently, the Fair Housing Act does not protect veterans or members of the armed forces from discrimination. An uneven patchwork of state laws provides some protections, but the most important federal housing discrimination law is completely silent on protecting America’s heroes. For servicemembers who are reassigned from state to state (or territory), they face a changing level of legal protection. The same inconsistency exists for military retirees.

Senator Scott Brown’s bill extends federal housing protections to America’s heroes

Senator Scott Brown’s “Ending Housing Discrimination Against Servicemembers and Veterans Act of 2012” will amend the Fair Housing Act to extend its protections to veterans and military servicemembers. No longer will it be legal to discriminate against those who serve or have served when they engage in real estate transactions, including renting, leasing, or buying a home. Denying veterans and servicemembers the same access to housing as others, on the basis of their service our nation, will become illegal. For the first time, every veteran and servicemember will be protected from housing discrimination in every state and territory of the United States.

Those veterans and servicemembers who are discriminated against in any part of the housing market will be able to make enforcement complaints to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s Fair Housing office *and* the U.S. Department of Justice Department’s Housing and Civil Enforcement Section (within DOJ Division of Civil Rights).

“Even if a servicemember or veteran comes from a state with strong laws preventing housing discrimination, they are just one move or transfer away from losing those protections. Our heroes should never have to worry about being barred from renting or owning a home because they answered the call and made sacrifices for our country. My legislation makes housing discrimination against our veterans and servicemembers illegal nationwide for the first time,” said Senator Brown.