

Subject Line:

Watch: Nikole Hannah-Jones, Matt Desmond, & Rep. Watson Coleman Discuss Solutions to Residential Segregation with Affordable Housing Advocates

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Watch: Leading Luminaries Discuss Residential Segregation — And How to Dismantle It

Speakers Examine Solutions to Segregation Upon Release of Matt Desmond’s Highly-Anticipated New Book, Poverty, by America

What Can Policymakers and Advocates Learn from New Jersey’s Groundbreaking Fair Housing Model?

At an event this week organized by New Jersey’s Fair Share Housing Center, leading experts held a provocative discussion on structural racism, poverty, and solutions to residential segregation, upon the release of Matt Desmond’s new book *Poverty, by America*. Speakers weighed in on policies that can dismantle systems of inequity — especially New Jersey’s groundbreaking *Mount Laurel* framework, which Desmond discusses in his new book.

[Watch: “Residential Segregation in America: Moving Towards Integrated, Inclusive Communities”](#)

“New Jersey’s model is a useful national blueprint and a step in the right direction for beginning to address the nationwide housing crisis,” said **Matt Desmond**, the Pulitzer Prize-winning Princeton professor and founding director of the Eviction Lab. “But this won’t just happen on its own. As individuals, we need to make a concerted and continuous effort to break down racial and economic exclusion — showing up at council meetings, planning board meetings, zoning board meetings, and putting pressure on policymakers for investments in broad prosperity.”

New Jersey’s [Mount Laurel Doctrine](#) — known as the strongest framework in the nation to require affordable homes in historically exclusionary communities — has led to the creation of over 70,000 affordable homes, helping address racial segregation throughout New Jersey.

“Ensuring access to affordable housing in vibrant communities, with strong schools and employment opportunities, addresses many other problems at their root,” said **U.S. Congresswoman Bonnie Watson Coleman**, the former Majority Leader of the New Jersey General Assembly. “Over the course of New Jersey’s history, fair housing policies have been integral in making our state more inclusive. The Mount Laurel Doctrine, requiring every municipality to provide fair housing opportunities, can be a role model for other states to follow.”

Later this spring, Fair Share Housing Center will release a major report detailing the impact of a 2015 New Jersey Supreme Court decision reinvigorating the Mount Laurel Doctrine — which has already led to over 20,000 affordable homes in historically exclusionary communities throughout New Jersey.

“Across the US, policies like exclusionary zoning are perpetuating segregation and harming low-income communities of color through the maintenance of unequal education, policing, economic, and health systems,” said **Adam Gordon**, Executive Director of New Jersey’s Fair Share Housing Center. “Exclusionary zoning has deprived many states of the housing investment that New Jersey is benefiting from — as well as the affordability, jobs, and community amenities that come with that housing. At a time when housing is more expensive than ever, we need strong action to break down these barriers and build on what we have learned in New Jersey about how to do that.

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[FAIR SHARE HOUSING CENTER](#) *is a nonprofit advocacy organization that uses legal, policy, and community-building strategies to dismantle decades of racial and economic discrimination in New Jersey and nationally that excludes people from the opportunity to live in safe, healthy, and affordable housing.*