

119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. _____

To provide protection for survivors of domestic violence, sexual violence,
and sex trafficking under the Fair Housing Act.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mrs. SHAHEEN introduced the following bill; which was read twice and
referred to the Committee on _____

A BILL

To provide protection for survivors of domestic violence, sexual
violence, and sex trafficking under the Fair Housing
Act.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Fair Housing for Sur-
5 vivors Act of 2026”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress makes the following findings:

8 (1) Cities, towns, and rural communities in the
9 United States continue to face enormous challenges
10 regarding domestic violence, sexual assault, sex traf-

1 ficking, dating violence, stalking, and other forms of
2 intimate partner and gender-based violence.

3 (2) One in three women and one in four men
4 in the United States have experienced rape, physical
5 violence, or stalking by an intimate partner in his or
6 her lifetime.

7 (3) Intimate partner violence alone affects more
8 than 10,000,000 people in the United States every
9 year.

10 (4) Among women experiencing sex trafficking,
11 many of their traffickers are also their intimate
12 partners.

13 (5) Each day, an average of three women are
14 killed by a current or former partner.

15 (6) Researchers estimate that domestic violence
16 costs employers up to \$8,300,000,000 each year,
17 and that sexual violence results in more than
18 \$122,000 in lifetime costs per survivor and nearly
19 \$3,100,000,000,000 in costs to the United States
20 economy across all 25,000,000 survivors in the
21 United States.

22 (7) Research indicates the following:

23 (A) 90 percent of homeless women report
24 having experienced severe physical or sexual vi-

1 olence at some point in their lives, including
2 sexual exploitation and trafficking.

3 (B) 84 percent of survivors in domestic vi-
4 olence shelters reported that they needed help
5 finding affordable housing. More than half of
6 victims who identified a need for housing serv-
7 ices did not receive them.

8 (C) Survivors who become homeless as a
9 result of sexual assault are vulnerable to fur-
10 ther violence, including sexual victimization, ex-
11 ploitation, and sex trafficking. Being homeless
12 can increase an individual's risk of experiencing
13 violence, including sexual violence.

14 (D) Women and men who experienced food
15 or housing insecurity in a 12-month period were
16 more likely to experience rape, physical violence,
17 or stalking by an intimate partner in the same
18 period.

19 (E) Women of color, domestic violence sur-
20 vivors, and women with children are among
21 those at the highest risk of eviction.

22 (F) Vulnerable women are also at risk of
23 sex trafficking and exploitation by landlords
24 who pressure them for sex in exchange for rent
25 or a delay in rent payments.

1 (G) Women who experience intimate part-
2 ner violence are four times more likely to expe-
3 rience homelessness than those who do not.

4 (H) A majority of survivors who experience
5 a sexual assault in their home do not relocate
6 to a safe environment because they do not have
7 sufficient funds, have a past eviction or crimi-
8 nal record related to their experience as a sur-
9 vivor, are not aware of temporary shelter and
10 housing resources available to survivors, or suf-
11 fer from trauma that can make relocation feel
12 impossible.

13 (I) Survivors of domestic violence or sexual
14 assault often face eviction based on a single in-
15 cident of violence.

16 (8) Domestic and sexual violence survivors
17 often find themselves trapped in homes where they
18 are further victimized by caregivers, parents, sib-
19 lings, landlords, intimate partners, neighbors, or oth-
20 ers in or near their home.

21 (9) Domestic and sexual violence survivors con-
22 tinue to face discrimination in securing and main-
23 taining housing based on their status as survivors
24 and as a result of abuse committed against them.

1 (10) Survivors of domestic violence or sexual
2 assault are commonly denied housing opportunities
3 if a previous residence of the survivor was a domes-
4 tic violence shelter, if the survivor has secured a pro-
5 tective order, or if there is other evidence that the
6 survivor has experienced a previous domestic vio-
7 lence incident.

8 (11) Securing safe and affordable housing for
9 survivors is a fundamental component of ending do-
10 mestic and sexual violence.

11 **SEC. 3. SURVIVORS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE OR SEXUAL**
12 **ASSAULT AS PROTECTED CLASS UNDER THE**
13 **FAIR HOUSING ACT.**

14 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Fair Housing Act (42 U.S.C.
15 3601 et seq.) is amended—

16 (1) in section 802 (42 U.S.C. 3602), by adding
17 at the end the following:

18 “(p) ‘Domestic violence’—

19 “(1) has the meaning given the term in section
20 40002(a) of the Violence Against Women Act of
21 1994 (34 U.S.C. 12291(a)); and

22 “(2) includes—

23 “(A) dating violence and stalking, as such
24 terms are defined in such section 40002(a); and

25 “(B) threatened domestic violence.

1 “(q) ‘Sexual assault’—

2 “(1) has the meaning given the term in section
3 40002(a) of the Violence Against Women Act of
4 1994 (34 U.S.C. 12291(a)); and

5 “(2) includes threatened sexual assault.

6 “(r) ‘Severe forms of trafficking in persons’ has the
7 meaning given the term in section 103 of the Trafficking
8 Victims Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7102).

9 “(s) ‘Coercion’ has the meaning given the term in sec-
10 tion 103 of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000
11 (22 U.S.C. 7102).

12 “(t) ‘Survivor of domestic violence, sexual assault, or
13 severe forms of trafficking in persons’ includes any person
14 who experienced or is perceived to have experienced do-
15 mestic violence, sexual assault, or severe forms of traf-
16 ficking in persons.”;

17 (2) in section 804 (42 U.S.C. 3604)—

18 (A) in subsection (a), by striking “or na-
19 tional origin” and inserting “national origin, or
20 whether a person is a survivor of domestic vio-
21 lence, sexual assault, or severe forms of traf-
22 ficking in persons”;

23 (B) in subsection (b), by striking “or na-
24 tional origin” and inserting “national origin, or
25 whether a person is a survivor of domestic vio-

1 ence, sexual assault, or severe forms of traf-
2 ficking in persons”;

3 (C) in subsection (c), by striking “or na-
4 tional origin” and inserting “national origin, or
5 whether a person is a survivor of domestic vio-
6 lence, sexual assault, or severe forms of traf-
7 ficking in persons”;

8 (D) in subsection (d), by striking “or na-
9 tional origin” and inserting “national origin, or
10 whether a person is a survivor of domestic vio-
11 lence, sexual assault, or severe forms of traf-
12 ficking in persons”; and

13 (E) in subsection (e), by striking “or na-
14 tional origin” and inserting “national origin, or
15 whether a person is a survivor of domestic vio-
16 lence, sexual assault, or severe forms of traf-
17 ficking in persons”;

18 (3) in section 805 (42 U.S.C. 3605)—

19 (A) in subsection (a), by striking “or na-
20 tional origin” and inserting “national origin, or
21 whether a person is a survivor of domestic vio-
22 lence, sexual assault, or severe forms of traf-
23 ficking in persons”; and

24 (B) in subsection (c), by striking “or fa-
25 miliar status” and inserting “familial status, or

1 whether a person is a survivor of domestic vio-
2 lence, sexual assault, or severe forms of traf-
3 ficking in persons”;

4 (4) in section 806 (42 U.S.C. 3606), by striking
5 “or national origin” and inserting “national origin,
6 or whether a person is a survivor of domestic vio-
7 lence, sexual assault, or severe forms of trafficking
8 in persons”;

9 (5) in section 807 (42 U.S.C. 3607), by adding
10 at the end the following:

11 “(c) Nothing in this title shall prohibit a Federal,
12 State, unit of local government, or other assistance or
13 preference program from being designed to assist or ben-
14 efit survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, or se-
15 vere forms of trafficking in persons in seeking, securing,
16 or maintaining dwellings, shelters, or any other form of
17 housing for such survivors, including associated notices,
18 statements, or advertisements of such dwelling.”; and

19 (6) in section 808(e)(6) (42 U.S.C. 3608(e)(6)),
20 by inserting “status as a survivor of domestic vio-
21 lence, sexual assault, or severe forms of trafficking
22 in persons,” after “handicap,”.

23 (b) PREVENTION OF INTIMIDATION IN FAIR HOUS-
24 ING CASES.—Title IX of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 (42
25 U.S.C. 3631) is amended—

1 (1) in section 901 (42 U.S.C. 3631)—

2 (A) in the matter preceding subsection (a),
3 by inserting “or coercion” after “threat of
4 force”;

5 (B) in subsection (a), by striking “or na-
6 tional origin” and inserting “national origin, or
7 because the person is a survivor of domestic vio-
8 lence, sexual assault, or severe forms of traf-
9 ficking in persons”;

10 (C) in subsection (b)(1), by striking “or
11 national origin” and inserting “national origin,
12 or because a person is a survivor of domestic vi-
13 olence, sexual assault, or severe forms of traf-
14 ficking in persons”; and

15 (D) in subsection (c), by striking “or na-
16 tional origin” and inserting “national origin, or
17 because a person is a survivor of domestic vio-
18 lence, sexual assault, or severe forms of traf-
19 ficking in persons”; and

20 (2) by inserting after section 901 the following:

21 **“SEC. 902. DEFINITIONS.**

22 “In this title, the terms ‘domestic violence’, ‘sexual
23 assault’, ‘severe forms of trafficking in persons’, ‘coercion’,
24 and ‘survivor of domestic violence, sexual assault, or se-

1 vere forms of trafficking in persons' shall have the mean-
2 ing given such terms in section 802.''.

3 (c) PRESERVATION OF SURVIVORS' ABILITY TO RE-
4 COVER FOR OTHER FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION.—Noth-
5 ing in this Act, or an amendment made by this Act, shall
6 be interpreted to limit the ability of survivors of domestic
7 violence, sexual assault, or severe forms of trafficking in
8 persons to recover for any other claims of discrimination
9 under the Fair Housing Act (42 U.S.C. 3601 et seq.), in-
10 cluding with respect to failure to conform to gender stereo-
11 types or policies that disproportionately affect women.