

BEVERLY, MASSACHUSETTS

August 9, 1966

The Honorable William Bates
House of Representatives
Office Building
Washington, D.C.

Dear Bill:

Even at the risk of incurring the tab of being Anti Civil Rights or pro this or pro that, I can think of nothing more important than Legislation now before the House in the form of HR 14765, called the 1966 Civil Rights Bill.

Not too long ago I volunteered, as you did, for service to my country. I did this with great honor and pride to preserve freedom and democracy. I deplore prejudice and discrimination in any form, and I work hard to offer equal opportunity to anyone. I fought for this right and wish to see it preserved. I also have worked hard to accumulate some private property. The idea that I might be forced to sell it or to lease it to anyone, however, is beyond all reason. I fought for the concept of private property and wish to see it preserved. Private property means just what it says. The decision to buy, build or sell, is a very private and personal decision and to force me to do otherwise is contrary to my own conscience, just as it would be for someone to force a different religious belief upon me. This Legislation has very serious and far reaching implications on every property owner in this country. The enforcement of such legislation could bring terrible harassment upon innocent persons, if used as a tactic by any group or individual. This bill does not need further hearings. It deserves to be defeated decisively and forthwith. Let not our fight be in vain. I urge you to preserve this freedom which is a very private matter with my conscience. I am confident that I can justify it to my Maker at the appropriate time.

Never more sincere,

cc. Senator Everett Dirksen