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## DIGEST

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Smith

HB No. 871

**Abstract:** Makes various changes to provisions of the La. Equal Housing Opportunity Act.

Present law of the La. Equal Housing Opportunity Act generally provides that all persons should be able to compete for available housing on an open, fair, and equitable basis, regardless of race, color, religion, sex, familial status, or national origin.

Proposed law adds a person's sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, marital status, veteran's status, lawful source of income, and status as a victim of domestic abuse to the La. Equal Housing Opportunity Act as factors not to be considered in the competition for available housing.

Proposed law defines "arrest or conviction record" as information indicating a person's questioning, apprehension, custody or detention, hold for investigation, arrest, charge, indictment, or trial for a felony, misdemeanor, or other offense pursuant to any law enforcement or military authority. Proposed law further provides that "arrest or conviction record" means information indicating a person's conviction of a felony, misdemeanor, or other offense, placement on probation, applicable fine, imprisonment, or parole pursuant to any law enforcement or military authority.

Proposed law defines "gender expression" as a person's actual or perceived gender-related appearance or behavior, regardless of the person's designated sex at birth.

Proposed law defines "gender identity" as a person's actual or perceived gender-related identity, regardless of the person's designated sex at birth.

Proposed law defines a person's "marital status" as being married, divorced, widowed, separated, single, or a cohabitant.

Proposed law defines "sexual orientation" as a person's actual or perceived homosexuality, heterosexuality, or bisexuality.

Proposed law defines "veteran's status" as one's status of having been honorably discharged from the armed forces of the United States including reserved components of the armed forces, the Army National Guard and the Air National Guard, the commissioned corps of the Public Health Service, and any other category of persons designated by the president in time of war or emergency.

Proposed law provides that in the selling or renting of certain nonpublic and nonfederal assistance housing, it is unlawful to refuse to sell or rent, refuse to negotiate for the sale or rental of, or otherwise make unavailable or deny housing to any person because of an arrest record unless, given the nature of the housing, a reasonable person would have a justifiable fear for the safety of the landlord or tenant property or for the safety of other residents or employees.

Proposed law provides that, when a person who refuses to rent or sell, negotiate for the sale or rental of, or otherwise make unavailable or deny certain nonpublic or nonfederal assistance housing because an arrest or conviction record would cause a reasonable person to have a justifiable fear for the safety of the landlord or tenant property or for the safety of other residents or employees, he shall provide the rejected party a written statement of refusal detailing.

(Amends R.S. 51:2602(A), 2603, 2606(A)(1)-(5), (B), and (C), 2607(A) and (C), and 2608;  
Adds R.S. 51:2606(A)(7) and (D))