

# Commission on Human Rights

## **Kentucky Human Rights Commission and University of Kentucky Law School will hold legal symposium in honor of Kentucky Civil Rights Act anniversary**

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On January 27, 2016, the Kentucky Commission on Human Rights with the University of Kentucky College of Law will present a law symposium in commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the passage of the Kentucky Civil Rights Act of 1966.

The one-day symposium will be held at the University of Kentucky College of Law, 620 S. Limestone, Lexington, Ky., 40506-0048, in the Law School Courtroom. The symposium will consist of a series of panels and speakers prominent in the civil rights arena, including legislators, judges, activists and attorneys. The keynote speaker will be Patricia Timmons-Goodson, co-chair of the United States Commission on Civil Rights. The symposium, which will be in session from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., is free and open to the public. Registration information will be provided in the coming months.

On January 27, 1966, while seated beneath the statue of native son Abraham Lincoln in the state capitol rotunda, Gov. Edward T. Breathitt signed into law one of the most significant pieces of legislation in the history of the commonwealth – the Kentucky Civil Rights Act. This momentous law made Kentucky the first state south of the Mason-Dixon Line to have an enforceable civil rights act. It prohibited discrimination in employment and public accommodations, based on race, color, religion or national origin. Upon its passage, Dr. Martin Luther King sent a telegram to Gov. Breathitt: “This is a milestone for a southern state...a great step forward for any state. [It] will serve as a great beacon of light for all men of goodwill...and hopefully inspire other states to follow suit.” Later, Dr. King commented on the law’s effectiveness: “[It] is the strongest and most comprehensive civil rights bill passed by a southern state.”

Through a succession of amendments, the Kentucky Civil Rights Act has expanded its protected classes and jurisdiction. It now prohibits discrimination in employment, public accommodations, housing, and credit transactions based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age (employment), familial status (housing), disability and smoking status (employment).

The Kentucky Commission on Human Rights is the state agency charged with the enforcement of the Kentucky Civil Rights Act and the eradication of unlawful discrimination throughout the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

To make advance reservations for the symposium, visit the UK law school website that announces the event. Reservation instructions will be forthcoming. Follow this link;  
<http://law.uky.edu/CivilRightsSymp>