AL LAWSON, JR.
5TH DISTRICT, FLORIDA

1337 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
(202) 225-0123

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515–0905

March 9, 2017

Hon. Ben Carson
Secretary
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
451 7th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20410

Dear Secretary Carson:

Recently I had an opportunity to visit and meet with the residents of the Eureka Gardens Apartments, a privately owned HUD-subsided apartment community in Jacksonville, FL, and saw first-hand the subpar conditions that exist there. The stories I heard from the residents broke my heart.

Like most Americans, the residents of Eureka Gardens want a clean, affordable, and safe place to raise their families and to call home.

Sadly, under the previous management company, Eureka Gardens had fallen into a horrible state of disrepair where residents had to combat black mold infestation, gas leaks, the loss of heat and hot water, no air conditioning, and a persistent crime problem.

It is my firm belief that people who pay rent, regardless of their income, neighborhood, or whether they live in privately owned or public housing, have the right to expect and get routine maintenance and not be forced to live under conditions that threaten their health or safety.

While the new management of this apartment complex has made improvements, I am asking for your assistance in ensuring that the new management of the complex is held accountable by rigorous assessments.

I also would like to better understand how the previous management was not held accountable for units falling into disrepair, and call on HUD to launch an investigation so that we can do everything in our power to prevent such atrocities in the future.

I am asking you to visit Eureka Gardens in the next 90 days so that you can see the conditions there for yourself and hear resident's stories.

Sincerely,

Al Lawson

Al Lawson, Jr.
Member of Congress

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