

November 12, 2008

Dear Senator _____ :

The supply of quality, affordable housing has been in decline in the New York Metropolitan area for years. The current economic crisis and bleak financial outlook threaten a full-blown housing crisis for the City's working families, disabled and senior citizens. Our single most important source of affordable housing is the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA). Providing homes for over 400,000 residents, it is the nation's largest public housing system. Today, after nearly a decade of the federal cuts, the very future of NYCHA is at risk.

Growing maintenance deficiencies and the declining condition of public housing cannot be fixed without the renewed support of the federal government. As the President of Teamsters Local 237, representing nearly 9,000 NYCHA employees, I urge you to immediately address this problem.

As Congress considers up-coming economic stimulus legislation, it is imperative that greater resources for the Public Housing Capital Fund be included in the list of critical infrastructure projects. While contributing to NYCHA's \$6 billion backlog of capital needs, this dedicated funding will also generate jobs and economic activity in surrounding communities.

But the most important reason to fulfill the governments' obligations is the health and safety of residents. Sadly, we have learned that deferring maintenance has life and death consequences. Two recent tragedies - the death of 5-year old Jacob Neuman and another incident involving the death of a baby - are linked to budget cuts and layoffs of elevator maintenance staff.

I have enclosed a recent news article on a New York City Council hearing regarding elevator maintenance at NYCHA and a short DVD highlighting our union's long-term campaign to save funding for public housing. Thank you for your attention to this crucial issue. I look forward to working with you to provide quality, affordable housing for New York City's working families, disabled and senior citizens.

Sincerely,



Gregory Floyd
President, Teamsters Local 237

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