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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
JIMMY GOMEZ
34TH DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

SUBCOMMITTEE ON HEALTH
SUBCOMMITTEE ON WORKER AND FAMILY
SUPPORT

**COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT
AND REFORM**

SUBCOMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT

ASSISTANT WHIP

November 4, 2021

The Honorable Marcia Fudge
Secretary
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
451 7th Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20410

Dear Secretary Fudge,

I write to express my urgent concern regarding the substandard housing conditions that jeopardize the health and well-being of residents at Cathay Manor Apartments (“Cathay Manor”) - a 16-story, 270-unit residential apartment building for low-income seniors in the Chinatown neighborhood of Downtown Los Angeles. I appreciate your commitment to ensure that every American has a safe, secure place to call home, unfortunately that promise falls short for the residents of Cathay Manor.

In September, after my office first received troubling reports from constituents, my staff contacted the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to express concerns about the unsafe, unhealthy, and physically deteriorating conditions at Cathay Manor. For instance, senior residents are held captive in their apartments because the building’s elevators are inoperable for long periods of time, preventing them from accessing necessities like food or seeking medical attention. Reports of inadequate lighting, bug and insect infestations, exposed wiring, lack of hot water, and a prolonged closure of the communal laundry room are equally disturbing.

In October, after inspectors from the City of Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety (LADBS) found the elevators hadn't been tested or maintained in compliance with the Los Angeles Fire Department's fire safety protocols, the City of Los Angeles placed the building on a "fire watch" and referred the case to the Los Angeles City Attorney's Office for investigation. Less than a week ago, the City of Los Angeles issued 16 criminal counts against CCOA Housing Corporation and its CEO and President Gong (Donald) Toy for months of negligence.

Residents of Cathay Manor deserve a decent, safe, and sanitary place to live, as is required under federal law. According to organizers from the Chinatown Community for Equitable Development (CCED), the Department has failed to inspect the building since 2017, despite worrisome scores

on previous inspections: 50c in 2017, 82b in 2015, and 65c in 2014. With this in mind, I respectfully ask that you answer the following questions:

1. What actions has HUD taken against the landlords of Cathay Manor?
2. What is the current timeline for corrective actions?
3. What immediate steps has the Department taken to ensure the residents of Cathay Manor have access to go grocery shopping, receive medical attention or just go outside?
4. Will HUD find safe, clean, and affordable housing for residents seeking to be relocated?

I stand ready to work in concert with you and your team to ensure every resident of Cathay Manor has access to decent, safe, and affordable housing.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jimmy Gomez". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Jimmy Gomez
Member of Congress

cc: General Deputy Assistant Secretary Sarah Brundage
Deputy Assistant Secretary Ethan D. Handelman