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Congress of the United States
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COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

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**COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT
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VICE CHAIR
SUBCOMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT

ASSISTANT WHIP

December 15, 2021

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

Dear Secretary Fudge:

I write on behalf of the residents of Cathay Manor Apartments (“Cathay Manor”) to strongly urge the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to call for the resignation of Don G. Toy, Chief Executive Officer and President of the Chinese Community on Aging (C.C.O.A) Housing Corporation. The substandard housing conditions at Cathay Manor jeopardize the health and well-being of its residents, and it’s no longer in the best interest of HUD or my constituents for Mr. Toy to continue in his role.

Cathay Manor, a 16-story, 270-unit residential apartment building, is owned and operated by the C.C.O.A. Housing Corporation, a nonprofit entity that developed Cathay Manor with financing through the HUD’s Section 202 Supportive Housing for the Elderly program and currently receives project-based Section 8 rental assistance.

As noted in my November 2021 letter, residents reported concerns about the unsafe, unhealthy, and physically deteriorating conditions at Cathay Manor. The most recent Real Estate Assessment Center (REAC) inspection score of 28c issued on October 13, 2021 confirmed tenant reports of rodent and roach infestations, exposed wires and electrical hazards, inoperable fire protection, mold and mildew, and broken sanitation systems, to name a few.

Recently, the Los Angeles City Attorney filed 16 misdemeanor charges against C.C.O.A. Housing Corporation and Mr. Toy relating to their alleged “failure over the past two months to address the inoperable elevators, their failure to properly maintain and repair the building and equipment contained in that building, their failure to test and maintain equipment in accordance with Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD) fire safety protocols, and their failure to comply with the City’s orders to comply with the law.”¹ Simply put, Mr. Toy’s dereliction of responsibilities has jeopardized the health and wellbeing of elder and disabled residents of Cathay Manor.

On December 7, HUD staff notified my office that it demanded Mr. Toy immediately hire a management agent to provide management services during this critical time. Mr. Toy was notified November 5, 2021 and was sent a Notice of Default December 7, 2021, making it clear that serious problems persist with his leadership.

¹ “City Attorney Mike Feuer Fights for Seniors in Chinatown Building Without Working Elevators,” Los Angeles City Attorney, Oct. 28, 2021, <https://www.lacityattorney.org/post/city-attorney-mike-feuer-fights-for-seniors-in-chinatown-building-without-working-elevators>.

This follows a community town hall organized by Cathay Manor residents, at which my office heard directly from constituents about the poor progress to improve living conditions. It is unconscionable that Mr. Toy remains in place, continuing to collect rent and taxpayer dollars, as he willfully refuses to perform his most basic obligations.

The health and well-being of Cathay Manor's residents is of utmost importance to me. I will not stand to see elderly residents uprooted from their communities, where they hold a strong sense of cultural belonging and can access essential services in their native language. HUD must act with urgency to address the deficiencies at Cathay Manor and ensure the residential building retains its Section 8 Housing Assistance Payments (HAP) contract, which is up for renewal on December 20, 2022. I again urge you to end Mr. Toy's involvement at Cathay Manor as quickly as possible and take swift and appropriate enforcement action.

Sincerely,

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

Jimmy Gomez
Member of Congress