

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

COMMITTEES:
COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND
TRANSPORTATION
FOREIGN RELATIONS
SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE
SMALL BUSINESS AND
ENTREPRENEURSHIP

May 24, 2016

The Honorable Secretary Julián Castro
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
451 7th Street, Southwest
Washington, D.C. 20410

Dear Secretary Castro:

As you know, on May 13th I visited Eureka Garden Apartments in Jacksonville, Florida. I visited apartment units and talked with tenants about the conditions that they have endured for the last six months. I also witnessed a facility in a state of disrepair, despite the fact that the property's owner, Global Ministries Foundation (GMF), sent repair crews to the complex 48 hours before my visit.

I write to you to express my wishes for the next steps in order to guarantee the health and safety of residents at Eureka Garden and other GMF properties nationwide. I appreciate the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) continued focus on the situation at Eureka Garden and other GMF properties. There remains much work to be done, but I am thankful for your attention and concern. It is my wish to bring to bear the full efforts of every agency with jurisdiction over this issue in order to hold GMF accountable.

I have asked the U.S. Department of Treasury to investigate GMF's nonprofit status after concerning claims about profits from its owner, Reverend Richard Hamlet, including the disparity between GMF's total revenue and amount spent on repairs. The trail of slum-like conditions at GMF properties raises concerns about the truthfulness of their claims to have spent "millions" of dollars in repairs.

I have asked the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) to open an investigation into Eureka Garden, its management, and other properties under GMF's ownership. The distance between Reverend Hamlet's claims of expenditure to benefit his properties and the reality on the ground is wide enough to merit an investigation into exactly where the money that GMF receives from the federal government has gone. We must hold all groups accountable for these problems so that residents are not exposed to these conditions in the future.

Therefore, I ask that you support these requests with documentation and cooperation through your own investigation through HUD's Office of the Inspector General. It is my hope that the coordinated effort of responsible agencies can correct the failures created by a faulty process and a slumlord.

Thank you for the work that you have done so far on this matter. I look forward to continuing working with HUD to protect the people and families of Eureka Garden, and to ensure that a situation like this never happens again.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Marco Rubio', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Marco Rubio
U.S. Senator