

From: Defend Glendale Campaign

To: Secretary Julian Castro, Department of Housing and Urban Development

Date: October 30, 2015

Subject: Glendale Townhomes, Minneapolis, MN

Dear Secretary Julian Castro:

On behalf of residents of Glendale Townhomes, Defend Glendale Campaign and all of our neighbors in Prospect Park Neighborhood, and allies in, thank you for your visit today in Minneapolis.

We want to point your attention to the recent proposal to privatize public housing in Minneapolis. Glendale Townhomes public housing development in the Prospect Park neighborhood of Southeast Minneapolis was proposed and constructed under the leadership of council members Glen and Dale and has proven for over 60 years to be a successful implementation of their vision of a safe, pleasant living environment that sets the stage for families of lower economic means to progress upward.

The Glendale townhomes is a place-based community that provides protection, a strong social network and stability for refugee, immigrant and low-income and working families with low wages; where between 570 to 600 individuals reside in 184 units of townhomes with 50% children.

Glendale Townhomes provides social and economic diversity making Prospect Park one of the unique communities in Minneapolis and throughout greater Minnesota. It provides safe green space and community gardening, promoting access to healthy food and a healthy community – critically important considering the significant health disparities facing our city and state, and the limited access to parks and open space for low-income residents in Minneapolis.

Studies are showing that the benefits of public housing demolition and their redevelopment accrue within upper income households, while the costs of displacement and instability largely fall on low-income communities of color. In this context, the Minneapolis Public Housing Authority has not demonstrated to the residents of Prospect Park that is already a mixed income neighborhood that there is no other option but to demolish Glendale for redevelopment.

Resident of Prospect Park Neighborhood Association voted to preserve, protect and rehab and not to demolish Glendale Townhomes, to end privatization plans, to keep it under public ownership. Furthermore, other public housing agencies, like the St. Paul Public Housing Agency, have worked collaboratively with other levels of government funding and creative solutions to successfully rehabilitated similar family public housing, in a financially sound manner, with little disruption to, and with support of, its current renters.

Currently there is only a 3 percent rental vacancy rate in the Minneapolis housing market, therefore, a demolition and multi-year high-density redevelopment for the public housing and any conversion into private Section 8 units will put Glendale families at risk of instability and homelessness.

We would like to know why is HUD allowing MPHA to spend funds in other areas rather than on maintaining and upkeep of Glendale that HUD itself has provided high score of 98/100 during recent inspections?

We want to know why is HUD allowing MPHA to apply to demolish, sell or convert Glendale Townhomes?

Our hope is that HUD will continue to support the preservation of Glendale under public ownership as it is now, and monitor MPHA to make sure all of the repairs and rehab needed will be available for Glendale as the cost is very little compare to the damage of displacing families.

Thank you, Secretary Castro for considering our letter. We hope that you will monitor this case and take action to protect 570 to 600 individuals, mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers, grandparents and 50% children so they stay where they have lived for decades to raise their families and continue to live and flourish in a mixed income neighborhood with a lot of support.

Sincerely,

Defend Glendale Campaign

cc: Congressman Keith Ellison

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