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## **Tenant Leaders and Advocates Call Upon HUD to Address the Dire Conditions and Racial Disparities at Millennia Properties**

In an April 4, 2022 letter to HUD Secretary Marcia Fudge, tenant leaders and housing advocates detailed a broad-ranging investigation of one of the nation's largest owners and operators of HUD's project-based Section 8 housing, Millennia Management Company LLC and Millennia Housing Management LTD., ("Millennia"), with a particular focus on the many properties in Black neighborhoods that the company has operated for years with hazardous conditions with HUD's full knowledge. Millennia properties in Black neighborhoods are under-resourced and housing conditions are not timely corrected, adversely impacting residents for years to come.

"Since 2017, when NAHT first convened the Millennia Task Force to investigate Millennia after a host of tenant complaints, we have been demanding that HUD and Millennia take actions to improve the housing conditions within Millennia's portfolio, to no avail," said Geraldine Collins, acting Executive Director of the National Alliance of HUD Tenants.

"For years, Millennia has promised the residents at Cordoba Courts that our homes would be rehabilitated on a timely basis," said Shalonda Rivers, President of the 22nd Avenue Apartments Cordoba Tenants Association in Opa Locka, Florida and a National Low-Income Housing Coalition board member. "But we have been forced to wait for years to live in habitable housing, and even now, what repairs have been made have failed to address serious issues like mold."

HUD has overlooked health and safety issues at Millennia owned and/or managed properties, despite repeated poor Real Estate Assessment Center ("REAC") scores, which HUD uses to measure physical conditions at its properties. The poor housing conditions at Millennia projects is one example of an overarching problem with HUD's lack of oversight of problem owners. In 2020, HUD's Inspector General found that ensuring that HUD's affordable housing is decent, safe, sanitary and in good repair was a top management challenge. Despite this finding, there has been no substantive change to ensure that all families in HUD housing are living in decent, safe and sanitary housing.

"Nearly a year ago, Secretary Fudge promised us that Millennia would be investigated and held accountable for its actions," said Charrise Crawford, Gabriel Towers Tenants Union president. "But we have yet to see a broad investigation of Millennia by HUD. We are still being threatened, harassed, and ignored by Millennia while living in homes that are killing us. And they are getting away with it."

“It is inexcusable that, in 2022, HUD continues to allow families continue to live in terrible housing conditions and fails to use existing tools at its disposal to keep families safe,” said Bridgett Simmons, a staff attorney at the National Housing Law Project.

They urge HUD Secretary Marcia Fudge to establish a Headquarters-level team that includes the Office of the Inspector General and the Office of Housing that will examine the significant and serious issues raised in the letter, develop and ensure better monitoring and enforcement of the agency’s condition standards to protect the health and safety of assisted residents and use new strategies to ensure that PBRA residents actually live in decent, safe and sanitary conditions.

“It is critical that HUD take action to remove landlords who cannot or will not maintain their PBRA properties in decent condition for tenants,” said John Henneberger, co-director of Texas Housers. “HUD has inadequate monitoring and oversight to uncover these problems and is far too slow to act to resolve them when they are brought to HUD’s attention.”

“Millennia’s conduct demands immediate attention from HUD to ensure that all assisted families are living in habitable housing,” said Diane Yentel, President and CEO of the National Low Income Housing Coalition.