



JANIS FULLILOVE
Councilwoman - District 8, Position 2

CITY COUNCIL
janis.fullilove@memphistn.gov

March 1, 2016

The Honorable State Senator Lee Harris
301 6th Avenue North
Suite 318 War Memorial Bldg.
Nashville, TN 37243

The Honorable Congressman Steve Cohen
Clifford Davis/Odell Horton Federal Building
167 North Main Street Suite 369
Memphis, TN 38103

The Honorable State Representative Karen Camper
4229 Oxford Park Drive
Memphis, TN 38116

The Honorable Senator Lamar Alexander
Clifford Davis-Odell Horton Federal Building
167 North Main Street Suite 1068
Memphis, TN 38103

The Honorable Senator Bob Corker
100 Peabody Place Suite 1125
Memphis, TN 38103

Dear Senators and Representatives:

The undersigned members of the Memphis City Council thank you for acting on our plea to help residents of several government-subsidized housing complexes to obtain relief from the worse than deplorable living conditions in those apartment developments. As a result of your assistance, HUD abated the Housing Assistance Payments (HAP) for the Warren and Tulane Apartments. While this action is consistent with our request, it may have unintended consequences for the very families we were attempting to assist. As we understand it, 359 families may need to relocate beginning March 1; while relocation to improved living conditions will ultimately improve these families' fates in the long term, it could cause temporary collateral consequences, such as requiring many children to change schools during the last 3 months of the school year. The stress and hardship of such a move on the children is something we would like to avoid.

We would respectfully request that HUD consider a transition plan that allows relocation of residents in an orderly way. Nevertheless we are NOT asking for any delay in the relocation of specific families who are living in unacceptable conditions and who want to leave immediately. We are advised, however, that additional assistance may be required to help certain families whose incomes limit their options to use Section 8 vouchers. Perhaps redeploying some of the HAP funding for this purpose may be an option.

We also support the City's request to be given time to suggest concrete alternatives to rehabilitating the units. Displacing all the families will technically abandon the property and,

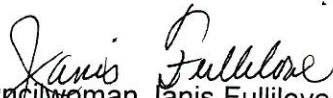


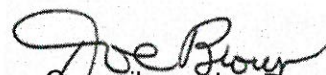
considering its deteriorated condition, will likely result in an abandoned property that at some point will be demolished at the expense of the City.

We endorse any approach that allows the already committed HAP funds to be used to avoid removing needed housing units from the area. This may involve the possibility of permitting a third party to take title to the properties from the current owner and keep the HAP funds that have already been committed to Warren and Tulane in place, permitting a new owner to invest in repairing the properties that can be repaired and improving the living conditions for the families who want to stay in their homes. Among other options, would be the authority of HUD to offer a creative solution to this community crisis by way of a HAP contract transfer as permitted in Section 8(bb)(1) of the U.S. Housing Act.

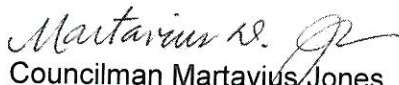
We too believe some sort of staged transition plan should be employed in the short term to mitigate hardships on the families. In order to accomplish this Secretary Castro would need to authorize an immediate delay in abatement action and allow the opportunity for the City to present options for relocating the residents at the Warren and Tulane Apartments and possibly for preserving affordable housing for low income residents of Memphis. In any event, however, we are extremely grateful that you were able to aid our constituents who had almost lost all hope that someone would help them.

Respectfully,


Councilwoman Janis Fullilove
Super District 8


Councilman Joe Brown
Super District 8


Councilwoman Patrice J. Robinson
District 3


Councilman Martavius Jones
Super District 8

CC:

Memphis City Councilmembers

Shelby County Commissioners

Edward Stanton III, US Attorney for Western District of Tennessee

Jim Strickland, Mayor of Memphis

Mark Luttrell, Shelby County Mayor