



OFFICE OF CHAIRMAN MENDELSON COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

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MENDELSON HOLDS JOINT ROUNDTABLE ON PROTECTING RESIDENTS' RIGHTS

WASHINGTON, DC – DC Council Chairman Phil Mendelson and Councilmember Anita Bonds held a joint-roundtable Thursday February 4th on protecting the rights of tenants at the Congress Heights Metro Station. The purpose of this roundtable was to provide a forum to discuss the actions of politically-connected developers over the last two years to remove low income tenants from apartment units in Congress Heights in order to make way for a new development.

“These tenants are being forced out under slum-like conditions,” Mendelson said. “And the result will be much less affordable housing in Ward 8.”

According to a lawsuit, filed by the Office of the Attorney General against Sanford Capital and its affiliates, complaints include rodents, bedbug infestations, improperly maintained plumbing facilities, lack of heat, lack of hot water, defective electrical outlets, and, in at least one case, a structurally unsound ceiling that collapsed on tenants. The Council is concerned about Sanford Capital’s dangerous disregard for the basic welfare of its tenants.

“What’s going on with this project speaks to what’s really going on with affordability in this city,” Mendelson pointed out. “On the one hand we talk about trying to preserve and increase the supply of affordable housing, while on the other hand we turn a blind eye to wealthy developers seeking to destroy low income housing in the pursuit of profit. When one looks at what’s actually happening with the housing conditions that these tenants are forced to live in, you can’t help but wonder if there isn’t some criminal intent.”

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