

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM

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October 20, 2017

The Honorable Trey Gowdy
Chairman
Committee on Oversight and Government Reform
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I am writing to request that you join me in placing the full authority of the Committee behind a letter that I and other members of the Maryland congressional delegation sent on August 18, 2017, requesting documents and information from the Kushner Companies relating to multiple reports that they failed to maintain rental units throughout the Baltimore region in compliance with the quality standards established by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for properties that participate in federal subsidy programs, such as the Section 8 rental assistance program.¹

According to these press reports, the Kushner Companies failed to properly maintain their rental units by eliminating rodent infestations, mold, and mildew, while at the same time aggressively seeking civil arrests of tenants who owe small sums of money.² Since we sent our letter, new allegations have emerged that the Kushner Companies may be engaging in a pattern of adding “small but improper fees to the rents of tenants” and “then misallocating rent payments to those fees in order to generate more fees.”³

We sent our letter to the Kushner Companies on August 18, requesting documents and a briefing by September 8, to enable us to examine whether they are complying with HUD standards. The Kushner Companies refused to respond. When my staff contacted the company

¹ Letter from Ranking Member Elijah E. Cummings, House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, et al. to Laurent Morali, President, Kushner Companies LLC (Aug. 18, 2017) (online at <https://democrats-oversight.house.gov/sites/democrats.oversight.house.gov/files/documents/2017-08-18.EEC%20et%20al%20to%20Morali-Kushner%20COS%20re%20MD%20HUD%20Housing%20Vouchers.pdf>).

² See, e.g., *Jared Kushner's Other Real Estate Empire*, New York Times Magazine (May 23, 2017) (online at www.nytimes.com/2017/05/23/magazine/jared-kushners-other-real-estate-empire.html?src=twr&mtref=www.politico.com&_r=1#story-continues-1); *Jared Kushner's Firm Seeks Arrest of Maryland Tenants to Collect Debt*, Baltimore Sun (Aug. 16, 2017) (online at www.baltimoresun.com/news/maryland/investigations/bs-md-kushner-arrests-20170812-story.html).

³ *Maryland Tenants Claim Kushner Real Estate Firm Overcharged Them*, New York Daily News (Sept. 27, 2017) (online at www.nydailynews.com/news/national/).

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prior to sending the letter, they were told that “no information would be provided” and that “the company did not need any letters from Congress.” Since we sent our letter, my staff attempted to call the company’s New York office six times, but company representatives refused to return these calls or provide any information about when the company would respond.

It is critical that we understand whether the Kushner Companies are meeting their obligations as landlords of properties that receive federal funding. My staff briefed your staff on these issues some time ago, and I now ask that you join me in sending a bipartisan letter to the Kushner Companies requesting the documents and briefing they have been withholding.

If you decline this request, then I ask that you place this matter on the agenda for the Committee’s next regularly scheduled business meeting and allow Committee Members to vote on a motion to issue a subpoena to compel the Kushner Companies to produce these documents.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



Elijah E. Cummings
Ranking Member