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Mike Alberts, executive director
Johnstown Housing Authority
501 Chestnut St.
Johnstown, PA 15906

April 18, 2023

Re: Right-to-Know request regarding Prospect community ceiling work

Mr. Alberts:

Thank you for providing me with the structural engineer's inspection report of the JHA's 110-unit Prospect housing community, which constitutes a partial fulfillment of my previous Right-to-Know request.

As you know, this inspection report details serious issues with the ceilings in Prospect, all of which appear to be on the verge of collapse, which was one of the primary given reasons the JHA ordered a mass evacuation of the community.

Under the heading of "Ceiling Observations," the inspection report on Prospect notes:

The gypsum wall board is attached to the wood framing with flat head nails. The nails seem relatively short with some penetrating the wood framing about ½". Some of the ceiling finish has collapsed due to both nail pull through and nail withdrawal. Nail pull through is when the nail shank remains in the framing member and the supported material, in this case gypsum wall board, pulls over the head of the nail. Nail withdrawal is when the nail pulls out of the framing member.

And under the heading of "Conclusions and Recommendations, the inspection report says:

All of the units and residences are exhibiting similar cracking in the ceilings. The collapse and ceiling cracking is most likely due to weakening of the bond between the gypsum wall board and nail heads and the nails to the wood framing ... Two recommendations are suggested however, these may not be the only solutions.

- 1. Remove the existing ceilings and install and finish new gypsum wall board using properly spaced fasteners such as dry wall screws and glue.**
- 2. Install 1" x 3" wood lath strips spaced at 16" on center over the existing ceiling construction. Install and finish new gypsum wall board using properly spaced fasteners such as dry wall screws and glue.**

As a follow-up arising from these findings, I am submitting another Pennsylvania Right-to-Know (Open Records) Law request asking for:

- Any and all documents related to the installation of this gypsum wall board and related cement plaster topping in the ceilings of the Prospect community housing units, including but not limited to contract specifications; contract solicitations, biddings and approvals; inspection reports; and payment amount(s) for work done.
- If this work was done in-house by JHA staff, any and all documents related to the work, including but not limited to work orders, inspection reports and administrative approvals.

I look forward to your promised fulfillment of the remainder of my original Right-to-Know request on Prospect, seeking documents and communications between the JHA and its insurance carrier, and between the JHA and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

If you desire any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Also, if you choose not to comply with this latest request, please state your legal objection in writing.

Sincerely,


State Rep. Frank Burns
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