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The Honorable John Culberson
United States Congressman
Texas, 7th District
10000 Memorial Drive
Suite 620
Houston, Texas 77024

Dear Mr. Culberson:

Thank you for meeting with me last week to discuss the Houston Housing Authority's proposed project at 2640 Fountainview. As I mentioned, presently I am the community leader in opposition to HHA's proposed Fountainview project and the voice for several hundred residents in Briargrove, Tanglewood, Briarcroft, Charnwood, Briarbend and various townhomes whom unanimously oppose the project. I am also the former Dad's Club President at Briargrove Elementary School and an active member on the PTO Board. My daughter went there from K through 5th, and my son is in the 4th grade there. I first learned of HHA's proposed Fountainview project at a PTO Executive Committee meeting back in December 2015. Since learning of it, I have spoken to and emailed with hundreds of people, and it is fair to say no one I have communicated with, including the home owners' associations of the above neighborhoods, knew of the proposed development until about a month ago. There has been a total lack of transparency. To say that HHA is trying to fly under the radar screen on this project is, at best, charitable. No notice is bad government policy.

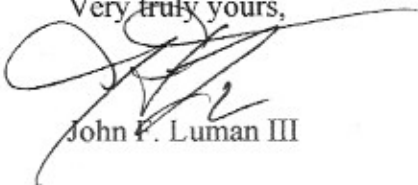
Now that residents of the affected neighborhoods know about the Fountainview project, they oppose it, not because it is low-income, but because the developers of this project cannot deliver on their promises to their potential residents. Indeed, there has been very thoughtful discourse on the need for affordable housing in Houston. Additionally, notwithstanding the utter failure of HHA to disclose the project to residents affected by it, the architectural plans recently shown to some of us depict a nice facility, which you would hope at a land purchase price of over \$17 million and proposed funding of \$36 million not including cost overruns.

The problem with the proposed location for the Fountainview project, however, is there is no public elementary school for the children in the 233 apartments to attend. Indeed, the Fountainview project will be zoned to Briargrove Elementary, a school that has been operating at capacity for several years. In fact, Briargrove Elementary turns away dozens and dozens of students at the beginning of every school year because there is no room for them. Those students who did not get in this year were offered the next closest available school with capacity: Memorial Elementary, 5.5 miles away by Memorial Park. The news station KPRC documented Briargrove's overcapacity problem with several reports this past August. See (1) <http://www.click2houston.com/news/students-show-up-to-school-to-find-no-room-in-classrooms>; (2) <http://www.click2houston.com/news/overcrowding-leaves-hisd-elementary-school-students-in-limbo>.

Our understanding is HUD and HHA seek to build affordable housing in "neighborhoods of high opportunity." One of the major criteria for new housing is access to better local schools. The Fountainview project does not meet that standard because the kids moving into those apartments are not guaranteed a spot in Briargrove Elementary. In fact, they realistically could wind up on a bus going to Memorial Park Elementary or some other elementary school miles away. Based on the number of proposed apartments (233 total, of which 77 will be two bedrooms), there could be a couple hundred kids looking for a place to go to elementary school. Additionally, the new Briargrove Elementary relief school being built on Fondren, Governor Mark White Elementary, will be at capacity before residents ever move into the Fountainview apartments. Where will the City of Houston accommodate the volume of new students? Why put a new City owned apartment complex in a location where the kids cannot go to a local school? Moreover, is it fair to the affected neighborhoods that they will not be able to send their kids to their local school due to the increase in students from a City owned apartment complex? Is it smart fiscal policy to take such a valuable, tax revenue generating property off the market? It is clear to all of us, HHA never considered school capacity, or anything else, when deciding on the Fountainview location. What exactly did they consider and study with respect to Fountainview?

HHA's Fountainview project has been opaque from the outset. It only came to light in the last couple of months, and it has taken a lot of digging and asking to learn about it. No one at HHA consulted with those in the affected neighborhoods or neighborhood HOAs. Trying to "slip" this project through is not how government should function. The location for the project is a bad idea, for both the future renters at the Fountainview apartments and those already living in the Briargrove Elementary school zone. We ask you to look into the process followed by HUD and HHA to see if they complied with all laws, rules, and regulations governing the selection of location for the Fountainview affordable housing project.

Very truly yours,



John F. Luman III