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August 2, 2024

Mr. Eben Ellertson
Partner
L+M Fund Management LLC
2 Park Avenue, Floor 23
New York, NY, 10016

Dear Mr. Ellertson,

As elected officials representing Roosevelt Island, we write to express our strong concern with the plan to submeter the 1,002 units of the Roosevelt Landings apartment complex. While we agree that submetering is a useful and important tool for meeting New York State's climate goals, residents have expressed concern that the current proposal shifts energy costs onto tenants without investing in the infrastructure upgrades necessary to empower tenants to both regulate apartment temperatures and reduce energy consumption. We the undersigned elected officials would like to echo the concerns of our constituents, including the 358 recipients of housing subsidies that live in Roosevelt Landings as well as senior citizens and residents with disabilities.

Tenants' ability to regulate the temperature of their apartments is at the core of our constituents' concerns. Residents have written to us about many issues within Roosevelt Landings. We consistently hear of three complaints directly impact tenants' ability to regulate the temperature within their units. One issue is porous exterior insulation that allows cold and hot air to escape from their apartments. The building supplied baseboard heaters are another issue that residents have brought to our attention. Residents state that the heaters are not adequate to heat their apartments and are prone to catching on fire. Finally, residents state that the thermostats in their units do not adequately measure heat, shut off without warning, and have not been calibrated by management. These thermostats were installed by the building to meet one of the 8 original conditions set forth by the Public Service Commission in the 2014 to stay submetering, therefore it is of the utmost importance that all thermostats are in good working order and are maintained properly prior to the stay being lifted. Our offices agree with residents that ownership must do all it can to address the material obstacles that inhibit tenants' ability to regulate indoor temperatures before implementing submetering and exposing tenants to the possibility of undue financial harm.

Tenants have often complained of the buildings' porous exterior insulation that allows hot air to leave units in the winter and cool air to leave units in summer. The inefficient insulation makes temperature regulation extremely challenging. Without proper insulation to keep apartments at regular temperatures, and reliable and safe heating and cooling units, tenants have resorted to using

plug-in space heaters, boiling water on their open stoves, and leaving their ovens on and open in order to maintain habitable temperatures during the winter months. Consistent temperatures in the summer and winter are extremely important for the health and safety of all residents, and especially those who are elderly and people with disabilities. Under submetering, these appliances would be paid for by tenants, and tenants would be disincentivized from maintaining habitable temperatures for fear of high utility costs.

Exterior insulation renovations are currently underway with an estimated completion time of 2026. These renovations would greatly increase tenants' ability to regulate indoor temperatures. However, the current plan is to implement submetering by December of 2024, before all apartments have adequate insulation. As such, tenants whose apartments have not yet been properly insulated would be required to pay for the extra costs of plug-in appliances without the benefit of effective insulation to keep temperatures stable. Under submetering, these tenants would be more likely to pay high utility bills as a consequence of unfinished insulation upgrades and would be punished for circumstances beyond their control.

As part of the submetering plan, management will not charge residents for the energy consumed by building supplied baseboard heating units. However, residents have let us know of their reluctance to use building supplied heat because baseboard units are prone to catching on fire. We are obviously alarmed by the many reports of fires from baseboard heating units. As such, we have strong reservations about the current plan to submeter Roosevelt Landings which incentivizes residents to use baseboard heating units. Ownership will force residents to choose between unsafe building supplied heat, and additional utility costs from plug-in appliances. No matter the outcome, tenants risk their physical and financial health while building ownership divests itself of the responsibility to provide for basic services. A just transition to submetering requires that all apartments have the necessary tools to safely lower costs and maintain healthy indoor temperatures.

Residents have reported that the quality and management of the thermostats makes adequate temperature control in their units difficult. Tenants assert that the placement of the thermostats in the apartments prevents an accurate reading of the temperatures in the main living areas. Tenants explain that when the thermostat is placed beside the kitchen, any additional heat from cooking artificially raises the thermostat's read temperature and does not reflect the temperature of the unit as a whole. Furthermore, tenants note that thermostats frequently cut off heat after three hours and have not been calibrated in several years. Other tenants report that the temperature in their apartments does not rise above 68 degrees Fahrenheit, despite the maximum setting of 72 degrees. Tenants received thermostats within their apartments pursuant to the Public Service Commission's conditions of 2014. Ensuring that thermostats have been fairly installed and maintained, not simply installed, is a necessary precondition of lifting the stay on submetering.

A new utility bill would disproportionately impact the financial wellbeing of some of our most vulnerable constituents. There are 358 subsidized housing recipients in Roosevelt Landings, as well as senior citizens and people with disabilities. Many tenants live on fixed incomes and the reliable structure of their rent bills at Roosevelt Landings, which do not charge for a separate utility bill, has been an important part of residents' monthly budget calculations. Submetering would introduce a new and variable energy bill that could greatly impact tenants' monthly expenses and

contribute to financial insecurity. In consideration of tenants' reasonable complaints regarding poor infrastructure, like the exterior insulation, baseboard units, and thermostats, and the potential for financial harm to tenants, we believe that L+M Fund Management LLC must first do all it can to upgrade inefficient infrastructure so that tenants have the resources they need to complete a just transition to submetering in their units.

The tenants at Roosevelt Landings have not expressed unreasonable opposition to submetering. Rather they have made a strong case that implementing submetering under the current state of affairs will exacerbate inequality and cause undue financial harm to the residents of Roosevelt Landings. We the undersigned elected officials write in support of the tenants of Roosevelt Landings, and request that the L+M Fund Management LLC pause implementation of this submetering plan until such a time as the residents' concerns regarding appliances, insulation, and equity be addressed.

Please don't hesitate to reach the Office of Assembly Member Rebecca Seawright at 212-288-4607 to discuss this matter. We appreciate your consideration and look forward to your response and anticipated cooperation.

Sincerely,



Rebecca A. Seawright
Assembly Member



Jerry Nadler
Congressman



Liz Krueger
Senator



Julie Menin
Council Member