

MARJORIE LANDA
DEPUTY COMPTROLLER FOR

CITY OF NEW YORK OFFICE OF THE COMPTROLLER SCOTT M. STRINGER

BUREAU OF AUDIT

October 12, 2018

By Electronic Mail

Mr. Stanley Brezenoff
Acting Chair & Chief Executive Officer
New York City Housing Authority
250 Broadway
New York, NY 10007

Re: Observations of Building Entrance Doors in NYCHA Developments Located in:

- Manhattan (SR19-057S)
- Brooklyn (SR19-064S)
- Queens (SR19-065S)
- The Bronx (SR19-063S)
- Staten Island (SR19-066S)

Dear Mr. Brezenoff:

Attached please find copies of the above-mentioned final reports of our findings related to door security at NYCHA developments, based on observations made between July 10, 2018 and August 29, 2018. As you will see, our observations are reported in five separate reports, one for each borough. Please let me know if you need any additional information related to these reports.

Sincerely,

Marjorie Landa

Mc/KSclemen

Attachment

c: Kelly MacNeal, First Deputy General Counsel
Cathy Pennington, Executive Vice-President for Operations
Hyacinth Jeffers, Acting Director of Audit
Anil Agrawal, Assistant Director of Audit
Dean Fuleihan, First Deputy Mayor
Melanie Hartzog, Director, Office of Management and Budget
Jeff Thamkittikasem, Director, Mayor's Office of Operations
George Davis, Deputy Director, Mayor's Office of Operations
Bernard Rosen, Chairperson, Audit Committee

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MARJORIE LANDA
DEPUTY COMPTROLLER FOR
AUDIT

BUREAU OF AUDIT

October 12, 2018

By Electronic Mail

Mr. Stanley Brezenoff Acting Chair & Chief Executive Officer New York City Housing Authority 250 Broadway New York, NY 10007

Re: Observations of Building Entrance Doors in NYCHA Developments Located in Manhattan, SR19-057S

Dear Mr. Brezenoff:

I am writing to inform you of numerous unlocked entrance doors and broken door locks recently observed by staff of the Comptroller's Office Audit Bureau at New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) developments in Manhattan. These observations were made in the course of a review of door security we conducted between July 10 and July 13, 2018, when Audit Bureau staff visited all 97 NYCHA developments located in Manhattan.

We are bringing our findings to your attention, along with similar findings for each of the other four boroughs, so that repairs can be made and tenant safety improved. A detailed list of our observations at each development in Manhattan is enclosed with this letter. That list includes observations of where entrance and exit doors were physically propped open or where we were able to open them (both referred to as "open" in this report), and where the doors were securely locked. The list also states whether the door areas we observed were equipped with cameras, which, according to NYCHA's *House Rules, Lease Terms and Policy*, are intended to deter objectionable conduct and consequently improve the safety and security of residents, employees and property. They could also enable NYCHA to address problems in real time.

With reference to the open doors, among other things, we found that the locks on many of the doors did not securely latch onto the door frames or strike plates, and in some cases it appeared that magnets on the doors and frames that were supposed to assist in securing the doors were missing or did not work, while other doors had been propped open with rope, chain or tape to prevent them from locking. Unsecured exterior doors that are not securely locked would enable intruders and unauthorized persons to gain access to the buildings and potentially put residents and authorized guests at risk. Further, these unsecured doors could also allow external weather conditions, such as moisture and cold air, into the building.

Overall, we found the following:

- In 32 of the 97 Manhattan developments more than 50 percent of the front entrance doors to the buildings were open, meaning they either were not locked or could be easily opened from the outside because their locks were not functioning properly.
- 281 of the 761 front entrance doors found in all of NYCHA buildings in Manhattan we surveyed (37 percent) were open.
- 89 out of 269 rear or side doors we found in all of the NYCHA developments we surveyed (33 percent) were not securely locked.¹
- 471 of the front entrance doors had cameras pointing at the front door. However, these observations do not reveal whether those cameras were operational or, if they were, whether anyone was monitoring the feeds in real time or soon thereafter to determine whether there were problems that needed to be addressed.

We observed the largest number of open and unsecured doors at the following four developments:

- <u>Johnson Houses</u>, in East Harlem on July 11, 2018, auditors observed that 15 out of the 17 front entrance doors (88 percent) were open and that 11 out of 14 rear exit doors (79 percent) were not securely locked. We observed security cameras at all entrance and exit doors but do not know whether they were in operation.
- Rangel Houses, in Washington Heights on July 10, 2018, auditors observed nine front entrance doors within the development, all of which (100 percent) were open. We did not observe any security cameras at the doors.
- <u>Kings Tower</u>, in Central Harlem on July 10, 2018, auditors observed 10 front entrance doors within the development, all of which (100 percent) were open and also found eight out of ten rear exit doors (80 percent) were not securely locked. We observed security cameras at all entrance and exit doors but do not know whether they were in operation.
- Lower East Side II, on Manhattan's Lower East Side on July 11, 2018, auditors observed 22 out of 31 front entrance doors (70 percent) were open, which allowed free access not only to the building but also to the rear recreational area that would otherwise be inaccessible to nonresidents. We did not observe any security cameras at the doors.

We are bringing our observations to your attention because of the obvious safety risks to tenants. We also note that, where locking mechanisms are nonfunctioning, the NYCHA developments may be in violation of the Rules of the City of New York, Title 1, §42-01(d) and (e):

¹ We are reporting only on the rear or side doors that we tested and were visible to us during our observations. There were buildings undergoing construction outside where scaffolding may have obstructed our view or access to any additional doors. Those doors would not be included in our observations.

Every entrance from the street, court, yard or cellar to a class A multiple dwelling erected or converted after January 1, 1968 containing eight or more apartments shall be equipped with automatic self-closing and self-locking doors. Such multiple dwelling, as aforesaid, shall also be equipped with an intercommunication system to be located at the required main entrance door. §42-01(d).

Subdivision (e) provides:

On or after January 1, 1969, every entrance from the street, court, yard or cellar to a class A multiple dwelling erected or converted prior to January 1, 1968 containing eight or more apartments, shall be equipped with automatic self-closing doors and self-locking doors and shall also be equipped with an intercommunication system. §42-01(e).

Please let me know if you need any additional information. In addition, questions regarding the above-described issues may be directed to Assistant Director Lawrence Welgrin at (212) 669-8326.

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,
MC/Clean

Marjorie Landa

Enc.

c: Kelly MacNeal, First Deputy General Counsel

c: Cathy Pennington, Executive Vice-President for Operations

c: Hyacinth Jeffers, Acting Director of Audit



MARJORIE LANDA
DEPUTY COMPTROLLER FOR
AUDIT

CITY OF NEW YORK OFFICE OF THE COMPTROLLER SCOTT M. STRINGER

BUREAU OF AUDIT

October 12, 2018

By Electronic Mail

Mr. Stanley Brezenoff Acting Chair & Chief Executive Officer New York City Housing Authority 250 Broadway New York, NY 10007

Re: Observations of Building Entrance Doors in NYCHA Developments Located in Brooklyn, SR19-064S

Dear Mr. Brezenoff:

I am writing to inform you of numerous unlocked entrance doors and broken door locks recently observed by staff of the Comptroller's Office Audit Bureau at New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) developments in Brooklyn. These observations were made in the course of a review of door security we conducted between August 1 and August 24, 2018, when Audit Bureau staff visited 86 NYCHA developments located in Brooklyn.¹

We are bringing our findings to your attention, along with similar findings for each of the other four boroughs, so that repairs can be made and tenant safety improved. A detailed list of our observations at each development in Brooklyn is enclosed with this letter. That list includes observations of where entrance and exit doors were physically propped open or where we were able to open them (both referred to as "open" in this report), and where the doors were securely locked. The list also states whether the door areas we observed were equipped with cameras, which, according to NYCHA's *House Rules, Lease Terms and Policy*, are intended to deter objectionable conduct and consequently improve the safety and security of residents, employees and property. They could also enable NYCHA to address problems in real time.

With reference to the open doors, among other things, we found that the locks on many of the doors did not securely latch onto the door frames or strike plates, and in some cases it appeared that magnets on the doors and frames that were supposed to assist in securing the doors were missing or did not work, while other doors had been propped open with rope, chain or tape to prevent them from locking. Unsecured exterior doors that are not securely locked would enable intruders and unauthorized persons to gain access to the buildings and potentially put residents and

¹ We did not conduct observations at East New York City Line, Fenimore Lefferts, Howard Avenue-Park Place and a few locations at Armstrong Houses (344-362 Clifton Place, 278-304 Lexington Avenue, 447-475 Gates Avenue and 250-254 Lexington Avenue) because they were set up as private residences.

authorized guests at risk. Further, these unsecured doors could also allow external weather conditions, such as moisture and cold air, into the building.

Overall, we found the following:

- In 13 of the 86 Brooklyn developments more than 50 percent of the front entrance doors to the buildings were open, meaning they either were not locked or could be easily opened from the outside because their locks were not functioning properly.
- 241 of the 1,432 front entrance doors (17 percent) of NYCHA buildings in Brooklyn were open.
- 51 out of 359 rear or side doors (14 percent) were not securely locked.²
- 628 of the front entrance doors had cameras pointing at the front door. However, these observations do not reveal whether those cameras were operational or, if they were, whether anyone was monitoring the feeds in real time or soon thereafter to determine whether there were problems that needed to be addressed.

We observed the largest number of open and unsecured doors at the following three developments:

- Albany Houses, in Crown Heights on August 14, 2018, auditors observed that five out of the nine front entrance doors (55 percent) were unlocked. We observed security cameras at two out of nine entrance doors but do not know whether they were in operation.
- Coney Island Houses, in Coney Island on August 1, 2018, auditors observed five front entrance doors within the development, all of which (100 percent) were open. We observed security cameras at all entrance doors but do not know whether they were in operation.
- <u>Farragut Houses</u>, in Downtown Brooklyn on August 1, 2018, auditors observed that 8 out of the 10 front entrance doors (80 percent) were open. We observed security cameras at all entrance and exit doors but do not know whether they were in operation.

We are bringing our observations to your attention because of the obvious safety risks to tenants. We also note that, where locking mechanisms are nonfunctioning, NYCHA developments may be in violation of the Rules of the City of New York, Title 1, §42-01(d) and (e):

Every entrance from the street, court, yard or cellar to a class A multiple dwelling erected or converted after January 1, 1968 containing eight or more apartments shall be equipped with automatic self-closing and self-locking doors. Such multiple

² We are reporting only on the rear or side doors that we tested and were visible to us during our observations. There were buildings undergoing construction outside where scaffolding obstructed our view or access to any additional doors. Those doors are not included in our percentage.

dwelling, as aforesaid, shall also be equipped with an intercommunication system to be located at the required main entrance door.

Subdivision (e), provides:

On or after January 1, 1969, every entrance from the street, court, yard or cellar to a class A multiple dwelling erected or converted prior to January 1, 1968 containing eight or more apartments, shall be equipped with automatic self-closing doors and self-locking doors and shall also be equipped with an intercommunication system.

Please let me know if you need any additional information. In addition, questions regarding the above-described issues may be directed to Assistant Director Lawrence Welgrin at (212) 669-8326.

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,

Marjorie Landa

Enc.

c: Kelly MacNeal, First Deputy General Counsel

c: Cathy Pennington, Executive Vice-President for Operations

c: Hyacinth Jeffers, Acting Director of Audit



CITY OF NEW YORK OFFICE OF THE COMPTROLLER SCOTT M. STRINGER

MARJORIE LANDA
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AUDIT

BUREAU OF AUDIT

October 12, 2018

By Electronic Mail

Mr. Stanley Brezenoff Acting Chair & Chief Executive Officer New York City Housing Authority 250 Broadway New York, NY 10007

Re: Observations of Building Entrance Doors in NYCHA Developments Located in Queens, SR19-065S

Dear Mr. Brezenoff:

I am writing to inform you of numerous unlocked entrance doors and broken door locks recently observed by staff of the Comptroller's Office Audit Bureau at New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) developments in Queens. These observations were made in the course of a review of door security we conducted between August 16 and August 22, 2018, when Audit Bureau staff visited all 21 NYCHA developments located in Queens.

We are bringing our findings to your attention, along with similar findings for each of the other four boroughs, so that repairs can be made and tenant safety improved. A detailed list of our observations at each development in Queens is enclosed with this letter. That list includes observations of where entrance and exit doors were physically propped open or where we were able to open them (both referred to as "open" in this report), and where the doors were securely locked. The list also states whether the door areas we observed were equipped with cameras, which, according to NYCHA's *House Rules, Lease Terms and Policy*, are intended to deter objectionable conduct and consequently improve the safety and security of residents, employees and property. They could also enable NYCHA to address problems in real time.

With reference to the open doors, among other things, we found that the locks on many of the doors did not securely latch onto the door frames or strike plates, and in some cases it appeared that magnets on the doors and frames that were supposed to assist in securing the doors were missing or did not work, while other doors had been propped open with rope, chain or tape to prevent them from locking. Unsecured exterior doors that are not securely locked would enable intruders and unauthorized persons to gain access to the buildings and potentially put residents and authorized guests at risk. Further, these unsecured doors could also allow external weather conditions, such as moisture and cold air, into the building.

Overall, we found the following:

- In 2 of the 21 Queens developments more than 50 percent of the front entrance doors to the buildings were open, meaning they either were not locked or could be easily opened from the outside because their locks were not functioning properly.
- 86 of the 470 front entrance doors (18 percent) of NYCHA buildings in Queens were open.
- 7 out of 81 rear or side doors (9 percent) were not securely locked.
- 323 of the front entrance doors had cameras pointing at the front door. However, these observations do not reveal whether those cameras were operational or, if they were, whether anyone was monitoring the feed in real time or soon thereafter to determine whether there were problems that needed to be addressed.

We observed the largest number of open and unsecured doors at the following developments:

- South Jamaica II, in Jamaica on August 16, 2018, auditors observed that 14 out of the 27 front entrance doors (51 percent) were open. We did not observe any security cameras at the doors.
- Redfern Houses, in Far Rockaway on August 22, 2018, auditors observed that 5 out of the 16 front entrance doors (31 percent) were open. We observed security cameras at all entrance doors but do not know whether they were in operation.
- Ocean Bay Oceanside Apartments, in Edgemere on August 22, 2018, auditors observed that 5 out of 14 front entrance doors (35 percent) were open. We observed security cameras at all entrance doors but do not know whether they were in operation.

We are bringing our observations to your attention because of the obvious safety risks to tenants. We also note that, where locking mechanisms are nonfunctioning, NYCHA developments may be in violation of the Rules of the City of New York, Title 1, §42-01(d) and (e):

Every entrance from the street, court, yard or cellar to a class A multiple dwelling erected or converted after January 1, 1968 containing eight or more apartments shall be equipped with automatic self-closing and self-locking doors. Such multiple dwelling, as aforesaid, shall also be equipped with an intercommunication system to be located at the required main entrance door.

¹ We are reporting only on the rear or side doors that we tested and were visible to us during our observations. There were buildings undergoing construction outside where scaffolding obstructed our view or access to any additional doors. Those doors are not included in our percentage.

Subdivision (e) provides:

On or after January 1, 1969, every entrance from the street, court, yard or cellar to a class A multiple dwelling erected or converted prior to January 1, 1968 containing eight or more apartments, shall be equipped with automatic self-closing doors and self-locking doors and shall also be equipped with an intercommunication system.

Please let me know if you need any additional information. In addition, questions regarding the above-described issues may be directed to Assistant Director Lawrence Welgrin at (212) 669-8326.

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,

Marjorie Landa

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c: Kelly MacNeal, First Deputy General Counsel

c: Cathy Pennington, Executive Vice-President for Operations

c: Hyacinth Jeffers, Acting Director of Audit



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DEPUTY COMPTROLLER FOR

CITY OF NEW YORK OFFICE OF THE COMPTROLLER SCOTT M. STRINGER

BUREAU OF AUDIT

October 12, 2018

By Electronic Mail

Mr. Stanley Brezenoff Acting Chair & Chief Executive Officer New York City Housing Authority 250 Broadway New York, NY 10007

Re: Observations of Building Entrance Doors in NYCHA Developments Located in the Bronx, SR19-063S

Dear Mr. Brezenoff:

I am writing to inform you of numerous unlocked entrance doors and broken door locks recently observed by staff of the Comptroller's Office Audit Bureau at New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) developments in the Bronx. These observations were made in the course of a review of door security we conducted between July 18 and July 31, 2018, when Audit Bureau staff visited 86 NYCHA developments located in the Bronx.¹

We are bringing our findings to your attention, along with similar findings for each of the other four boroughs, so that repairs can be made and tenant safety improved. A detailed list of our observations at each development in the Bronx is enclosed with this letter. That list includes observations of where entrance and exit doors were physically propped open or where we were able to open them (both referred to as "open" in this report), and where the doors were securely locked. The list also states whether the door areas we observed were equipped with cameras, which, according to NYCHA's *House Rules, Lease Terms and Policy*, are intended to deter objectionable conduct and consequently improve the safety and security of residents, employees and property. They could also enable NYCHA to address problems in real time.

With reference to the open doors, among other things, we found that the locks on many of the doors did not securely latch onto the door frames or strike plates, and in some cases it appeared that magnets on the doors and frames that were supposed to assist in securing the doors were missing or did not work, while other doors had been propped open with rope, chain or tape to prevent them from locking. Unsecured exterior doors that are not securely locked would enable intruders and unauthorized persons to gain access to the buildings and potentially put residents and authorized guests at risk. Further, these unsecured doors could also allow external weather conditions, such as moisture and cold air, into the building.

¹ We did not conduct observations at Clason Point Gardens because they were set up as individual private homes and surrounded by fencing.

Overall, we found the following:

- In 14 of the 86 Bronx developments more than 50 percent of the front entrance doors to the buildings were open, meaning they either were not locked or could be easily opened from the outside because their locks were not functioning properly.
- 185 of the 767 front entrance doors (24 percent) of NYCHA buildings in the Bronx were open.
- 56 out of 276 rear or side doors (20 percent) were not securely locked.²
- 365 of the front entrance doors had cameras pointing at the front door. However, these observations do not reveal whether those cameras were operational or, if they were, whether anyone was monitoring the feed in real time or soon thereafter to determine whether there were problems that needed to be addressed.

We observed the largest number of open and unsecured doors at the following four developments:

- Edenwald Houses, in Edenwald on July 19, 2018, auditors observed that 37 out of the 68 front entrance doors (54 percent) were open. We observed security cameras at 22 out of 68 entrance doors (32 percent) but do not know whether they were in operation.
- Betances II 18 & Betances III 18 Houses, in the South Bronx on July 19, 2018, auditors observed six front entrance doors within the development all of which (100 percent) were open. We did not observe any security cameras outside the doors.
- Bronx River Houses, in Soundview on July 26, 2018, auditors observed that 7 out of the 11 front entrance doors (63 percent) were open and that 4 out of 9 rear exit doors (44 percent) were not securely locked. We observed security cameras at all entrance doors but do not know whether they were in operation.
- Patterson Houses, in Mott Haven on July 18, 2018, auditors observed 14 out of 25 front entrance doors (56 percent) were open and 3 out of 24 rear exit doors (12 percent) were not securely locked. We observed security cameras at all entrance and exit doors but do not know whether they were in operation.

We are bringing our observations to your attention because of the obvious safety risks to tenants. We also note that, where locking mechanisms are nonfunctioning, NYCHA developments may be in violation of the Rules of the City of New York, Title 1 §42-01(d) and (e):

Every entrance from the street, court, yard or cellar to a class A multiple dwelling erected or converted after January 1, 1968 containing eight or more apartments shall be equipped with

² We are reporting only on the rear or side doors that we tested and were visible to us during our observations. There were buildings undergoing construction outside where scaffolding obstructed our view or access to any additional doors. Those doors are not included in our percentage.

automatic self-closing and self-locking doors. Such multiple dwelling, as aforesaid, shall also be equipped with an intercommunication system to be located at the required main entrance door.

Subdivision (e) provides:

On or after January 1, 1969, every entrance from the street, court, yard or cellar to a class A multiple dwelling erected or converted prior to January 1, 1968 containing eight or more apartments, shall be equipped with automatic self-closing doors and self-locking doors and shall also be equipped with an intercommunication system.

Please let me know if you need any additional information. In addition, questions regarding the above-described issues may be directed to Assistant Director Lawrence Welgrin at (212) 669-8326.

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,

Marjorie Landa

MC/Kleum

Enc.

- c: Kelly MacNeal, First Deputy General Counsel
- c: Cathy Pennington, Executive Vice-President for Operations
- c: Hyacinth Jeffers, Acting Director of Audit
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CITY OF NEW YORK OFFICE OF THE COMPTROLLER SCOTT M. STRINGER

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BUREAU OF AUDIT

October 12, 2018

By Electronic Mail

Mr. Stanley Brezenoff Acting Chair & Chief Executive Officer New York City Housing Authority 250 Broadway New York, NY 10007

> Re: Observations of Building Entrance Doors in NYCHA Developments Located in Staten Island, SR19-066S

Dear Mr. Brezenoff:

I am writing to inform you of numerous unlocked entrance doors and broken door locks recently observed by staff of the Comptroller's Office Audit Bureau at New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) developments in Staten Island. These observations were made in the course of a review of door security we conducted between August 28 and August 29, 2018, when Audit Bureau staff visited all 9 NYCHA developments located in Staten Island.¹

We are bringing our findings to your attention, along with similar findings for each of the other four boroughs, so that repairs can be made and tenant safety improved. A detailed list of our observations at each development in Staten Island is enclosed with this letter. That list includes observations of where entrance and exit doors were physically propped open or where we were able to open them (both referred to as "open" in this report), and where the doors were securely locked. The list also states whether the door areas we observed were equipped with cameras, which according to NYCHA's House Rules, Lease Terms and Policy, are intended to deter objectionable conduct and consequently improve the safety and security of residents, employees and property. They could also enable NYCHA to address problems in real time.

With reference to the open doors, among other things, we found that the locks on many of the doors did not securely latch onto the door frames or strike plates, and in some cases it appeared that magnets on the doors and frames that were supposed to assist in securing the doors were missing or did not work, while other doors had been propped open with rope, chain or tape to prevent them from locking. Unsecured exterior doors that are not securely locked would enable intruders and unauthorized persons to gain access to the buildings and potentially put residents and

¹ We did not conduct observations at a few locations at West Brighton I & II (155 Alaska Street, 1115 Castleton Avenue, 1085 Castleton Avenue, 1065 Castleton Avenue, 260 Broadway and 244 Broadway) because they were set up as private residences and 157-159 Alaska Street because the buildings were abandoned.

authorized guests at risk. Further, these unsecured doors could also allow external weather conditions, such as moisture and cold air, into the building.

Overall, we found the following:

- 21 of the 108 front entrance doors (19 percent) of NYCHA buildings in Staten Island were open.
- 6 out of 28 rear or side doors (21 percent) were not securely locked.²
- 100 of the front entrance doors had cameras pointing at the front door. However, these observations do not reveal whether those cameras were operational or, if they were, whether anyone was monitoring the feeds in real time or soon thereafter to determine whether there were problems that needed to be addressed.

We observed the largest number of open and unsecured doors at the following development:

• Mariner's Harbor, in Arlington – on August 28, 2018, auditors observed that 13 out of the 32 front entrance doors (40 percent) were open. We observed security cameras at all entrance doors but do not know whether they were in operation.

We are bringing our observations to your attention because of the obvious safety risks to tenants. We also note that, where locking mechanisms are nonfunctioning, NYCHA developments may also be in violation of the Rules of the City of New York, Title 1, §42-01(d) and (e):

Every entrance from the street, court, yard or cellar to a class A multiple dwelling erected or converted after January 1, 1968 containing eight or more apartments shall be equipped with automatic self-closing and self-locking doors. Such multiple dwelling, as aforesaid, shall also be equipped with an intercommunication system to be located at the required main entrance door.

Subdivision (e) provides:

On or after January 1, 1969, every entrance from the street, court, yard or cellar to a class A multiple dwelling erected or converted prior to January 1, 1968 containing eight or more apartments, shall be equipped with automatic self-closing doors and self-locking

² We are reporting only on the rear or side doors that we tested and were visible to us during our observations. There were buildings undergoing construction outside where scaffolding obstructed our view or access to any additional doors. Those doors are not included in our percentage.

doors and shall also be equipped with an intercommunication system.

Please let me know if you need any additional information. In addition, questions regarding the above-described issues may be directed to Assistant Director Lawrence Welgrin at (212) 669-8326.

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,

Marjorie Landa

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