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All Boarded Up and No Place to Go

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Logan Circle has undergone a major rebirth over the past few decades. We have new residential buildings, retail spaces, even a burgeoning art community. But crime and public safety are still a top concern. A large part of the problem is the abandoned and neglected properties that continue to make our neighborhood attractive to criminals.

A number of those buildings have not been kept in compliance with the District's maintenance standards for vacant property. The Logan Circle ANC's Committee on Crime and Public Safety and the Logan Circle Community Association have worked with the city to make owners aware of these standards and to ensure they're enforced, but many buildings remain in disrepair. People often live in these unfit structures; in some cases using them as bases for drug trafficking and other illegal activities.

We're especially troubled by the row of vacant houses between 1532 and 1542 9th St. NW. These buildings have been empty and neglected for years. Last year, when officers inspected them during Operation Fight Back, which was run by the Metropolitan Police Department in coordination with other District agencies, they found not only numerous building-code violations but illicit behavior as well. One of the police officers was injured when he fell from a structurally unsound stairwell while attempting to arrest a suspect.

Not only do these buildings invite illegal and dangerous behavior into our community, but their proximity to the new Convention Center exposes visitors and tourists to unsightly and hazardous conditions. Mayor-elect Fenty, please make strict enforcement of the District's vacant-property standards a priority in our community, and citywide.

-- Jennifer Trock, president, Logan Circle Community Association; co-chair, ANC2F Committee on Crime and Public Safety

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