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RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY

October 30, 2026

The Honorable Brooke Rollins
Secretary of Agriculture
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Secretary Rollins,

On Thursday, October 29, at least 56 of my constituents were evacuated from the Purcellville East Apartments complex located at 110-120 North 16th Street in Purcellville, Virginia. The complex includes units in the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Section 515 Program. Units across six buildings were evacuated following the reported collapse of a stairway to one of the buildings's second floor. A follow up inspection deemed the stairwells in six of the buildings unsafe. However, there have been reports of concerning conditions at Purcellville East Apartments for years, including black mold, leaking faucets, and broken air conditioning units.[1]

Now, residents are being placed in hotels and short term housing accommodations. Many of the families involved have young children, and the evacuation will impact proximity to school and work. According to Elizabeth Ford, the Founder of BetterALife, a nonprofit dedicated to ending hunger: "Most of these families work at Tropical Smoothie, at Giant, at their local restaurants, and so they're used to being able to walk from here to their job. Now that's not going to happen."[2]

Oversight is urgently needed to determine how and why these conditions were not addressed sooner. According to USDA policy, inspectors are required to conduct physical property inspections once every three years, with annual inspections for certain Section 515 properties that have outstanding physical deficiencies.[3]

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[1] *56 Purcellville Residents Displaced After Apartments Deemed Unsafe,* Loudoun Now (October 29, 2026) (online at: https://www.loudounnow.com/news/56-purcellville-residents-displaced-after-apartments-deemed-unsafe/article_1f6a0c29-09ed-4f72-aa02-a5979c09870e.html).

[2] *56 Purcellville Residents Displaced After Apartments Deemed Unsafe,* Loudoun Now (October 29, 2026) (online at: https://www.loudounnow.com/news/56-purcellville-residents-displaced-after-apartments-deemed-unsafe/article_1f6a0c29-09ed-4f72-aa02-a5979c09870e.html).

[3] *Multi-Family Housing Asset Management Handbook,* United States Department of Agriculture Rural Housing Service (online at: https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/guidance-documents/RHS%20HB-2-3560%20Consolidated.pdf).

Moreover, according to Office of Personnel Management (OPM) data, the USDA Rural Development staff, which administers the agencies' housing programs, is being reorganized.[4] Positions are being relocated to St. Louis, Missouri, and Dallas-Fort Worth, Texas, and the overall staff has decreased by approximately 38%.[5]

In light of these concerns, I request answers to the following questions by November 13, 2026. I also request that every property in Virginia's 10th District that is due for an inspection receive that inspection immediately.

1. How often are inspections (including interior, exterior, and backfill inspections) for the Purcellville East Apartments property meant to occur?
    a. When was the last inspection?
    b. What were the findings?
2. Have there been delays to USDA inspections of Section 515 housing over the last three years?
3. How many employees at USDA, or contractors, are currently responsible for conducting these inspections?
    a. How many employees were on staff, or were contracted, to conduct the inspections on January 19, 2025?
    b. Will the USDA inspectors be impacted by the agency's reorganization plans?
4. How many USDA housing inspections were conducted annually in 2024, 2025, and 2026?
5. Please list all Section 515 properties located in Virginia's 10th District, and the last time they were inspected.
6. Has USDA received any additional reports on deteriorating or concerning conditions from residents at any other Section 515 properties in Virginia's 10th District?
7. How have USDA affordable housing operations been impacted by staffing losses since January 20, 2025?
8. Given the recent Memorandum of Understanding between USDA and the Department of Housing and Urban Development, how will collaboration across agencies impact property inspections going forward?
9. Have there been any recent changes regarding whether USDA staff conduct inspections themselves, or whether contractors conduct the inspections?

I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Suhas Subramanyam
Member of Congress

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[4] *Reorganization,* United States Department of Agriculture (online at: https://www.rd.usda.gov/reorganization).

[5] *Federal Workforce Data,* OPM (online at: https://data.opm.gov/).