



Durbin mets with nominee for Housing and Urban Development's Inspector General

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WASHINGTON – Today, U.S. Senate Democratic Whip Dick Durbin (D-IL) met with Rae Oliver Davis, a Southern Illinois native who's been nominated to be the next Inspector General of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). During the meeting, Durbin and Oliver Davis discussed what her goals and priorities would be at HUD, and how the agency can provide greater oversight to ensure public housing residents have safe and healthy living conditions. Currently, HUD's Office of Inspector General (OIG) is investigating alleged mismanagement by Alexander County Housing Authority (ACHA) officials – and HUD's role in properly overseeing ACHA activities – that led to the housing crisis in Cairo, Illinois, where uninhabitable living conditions have forced hundreds of residents out of their housing units. In July 2017, Durbin and Senators Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) and Chuck Grassley (R-IA), along with U.S. Representative Mike Bost (R-IL-12) [called](#) on HUD OIG to complete this investigation as soon as possible and make its findings public.

“What's happened in Alexander County is nothing short of a tragedy. Residents of the housing complexes there deserve full transparency and accountability about what went wrong and why,” Durbin said. “It is absolutely necessary for the HUD IG, through their oversight role, to help ensure that families living in public housing across Illinois and the United States have a safe and healthy place to call home. In today's meeting, I urged Ms. Oliver Rae that, if confirmed, she make that her priority as the head of HUD's Office of Inspector General.”

Additionally, Durbin and Oliver Davis discussed a June 2018 report by the HUD Regional Inspector General in Chicago that found serious flaws in HUD's oversight of its lead-based paint reporting and prevention protocols. The report also faulted HUD for failing to put in place enforcement and reporting measures that require public housing authorities nationwide to properly identify and mitigate lead hazards in a timely manner.

In September 2017, Durbin introduced the [*Lead-Safe Housing for Kids Act*](#), which would require HUD to update its lead inspection and prevention regulations to ensure that children living in federally-assisted housing are protected from the risk of lead exposure.

Last month, Durbin and Duckworth (D-IL) [*wrote*](#) to HUD Secretary Carson reiterating their request for HUD to exercise every available measure to avoid evicting any of the remaining residents of the Elmwood and McBride public housing complexes in Cairo, Illinois.

HUD placed ACHA in receivership in February 2016, after Durbin and Rep. Bost called on the Department to investigate allegations that residents were living in substandard, often dangerous conditions, and hundreds of thousands of federal dollars had been misused by local housing authorities. Since the takeover, Durbin has met with ACHA staff, tenants, and community activists to discuss the unsafe living conditions at Elmwood and McBride, and his staff has worked closely with HUD and ACHA to address resident concerns.