

For immediate release

Thursday, October 14th, 2021

Tenants of Sunnydale and Potrero Hill with the United Front Against Displacement

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This Monday, October 18th at 4:30pm, tenants of Sunnydale and Potrero Hill public housing in San Francisco are holding a protest at San Francisco City Hall. Tenants are protesting the city government and San Francisco Housing Authority (SFHA)'s plan to eliminate the remaining public housing in the city by transferring management to a private landlord, the Eugene Burger Management Corporation (EMBC), starting this December. At the same time, the city's HOPE SF privatization scheme plans to continue destroying all the buildings and displacing residents to allow developers Mercy Housing, Related California, and BRIDGE Housing to build luxury condos on the land.

After decades of corruption and neglect of Sunnydale and Potrero Hill, forcing residents to live with black mold, pests, rodents, and open sewage, SFHA is evading all responsibility. SFHA sent hundreds of households at Sunnydale and Potrero Hill 90-day notices in September that their public housing leases would be terminated to allow the EBMC to take over in what is referred to in SFHA documents as "accelerated disposition". Under a private landlord, residents will have fewer rights, be more likely to be evicted, and have to pay more. The stability of public housing will be replaced with a Project Based Section 8 Vouchers that residents cannot take with them if they move, meaning that they will lose their subsidy. SFHA's story of EBMC taking over to improve conditions is a lie, because residents of other EBMC developments in San Francisco and other cities in California have attested to how EBMC neglects its properties and harasses tenants.

The HOPE SF website claims that "resident voice and vision drives decisions," but HOPE SF and Mayor London Breed have ignored residents' objections. SFHA and the developers have recently threatened residents that they will be homeless if they do not comply with the privatization. This Monday's protest is part of an ongoing movement at Sunnydale and Potrero Hill against the SFHA and city politicians making residents' lives worse to let developers make a profit. Tenants have held protests, delivered a petition, and are demanding SFHA keep their leases and immediately do necessary repairs.

The privatization of public housing is gentrification. All the other SFHA public housing developments in San Francisco have been privatized in recent decades, which has led to people being displaced, pushed out of the city entirely, and becoming homeless. This is happening across the country, and this protest is a part of a national movement with tenants organizing in New York City, Boston, Dallas, and Minneapolis.