



## United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0905

July 28, 2009

The Honorable Timothy F. Geithner  
Secretary  
Department of the Treasury  
1500 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20220

The Honorable Shaun Donovan  
Secretary  
Department of Housing and Urban Development  
451 7<sup>th</sup> Street, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20410

Dear Secretary Geithner and Secretary Donovan:

We are writing to request your assistance in expediting mortgage relief and other assistance to homeowners in our states who adversely have been impacted by defective Chinese drywall that was installed in their homes.

Since 2005, over 550 million pounds of drywall have been imported to the United States from China. In the last 18 months, numerous homeowners in 21 states and the District of Columbia have reported noxious fumes emanating from the drywall. The wall board also is suspected of causing serious metal corrosion in air conditioning units, copper pipes and electrical wiring.

In addition, a number of homeowners have reported health issues that appear to be related to the drywall, including bloody noses, headaches, insomnia and skin irritation. Many of these homeowners are seeing their property values decline, and some have even moved out of their homes and now are stuck paying two housing bills.

We strongly believe that something must be done to help.

In recent months, the Treasury Department and the Department of Housing and Urban Development have unveiled the Making Home Affordable program to provide mortgage refinancing and modification assistance to homeowners that are behind or "underwater" on their mortgages. We are concerned, however, that these current programs do not take into account the unique situations – and losses – incurred by owners of homes with tainted drywall.

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Therefore, we ask that you deploy HUD Foreclosure Rapid Response Teams to communities identified by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission or Environmental Protection Agency as having large clusters of homes impacted by defective Chinese drywall. We would also urge you to tailor the mortgage refinancing and modification programs to take into account the specific situation faced by these homeowners.

Finally, we are requesting that you reach out to mortgage lenders in these areas and urge them to help impacted homeowners. Many of the lenders have received substantial amounts of taxpayer-funded TARP subsidies – and to date have done little to nothing to help impacted homeowners and taxpayers hard hit by this crisis.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of these requests. We look forward to hearing details of your efforts to help these homeowners.

Sincerely,



Bill Nelson  
United States Senator



Mary L. Landrieu  
United States Senator



Jim Webb  
United States Senator