

The System, Not Just One Man

Good morning. My name is Damien Wright, and I am an ARHA resident.

Many in this room know that ARHA's CEO is now under investigation. But I am not here today to speak about one man. I am here to speak about a system — an agency that for far too long has been run by people who are untrained, incompetent, and unwilling to treat tenants with dignity and respect.

Eric Johnson did not create the corruption at ARHA. The culture of negligence and disrespect was already here when he arrived. That toxic culture made it easy for someone like him to thrive, but the truth is the problems are much bigger than any one person.

Every single day, tenants and seniors live in unsafe units with broken appliances, mold, asbestos, and water damage. We wait months or even years for repairs that should take days. What we are asking for are not luxuries — they are basic necessities. Safe housing. Functional appliances. Respect when we walk into a building to speak with staff. These are the bare minimum things that every family deserves.

Without safe housing, mental health breaks down. Without safe housing, children cannot focus in school. Without safe housing, families are destroyed. ARHA is destroying lives one day at a time.

Today, we urge the City Council to do more than investigate one man. We are asking you to fix the system. Hold the Board of Commissioners accountable. Remove the culture of disrespect and replace it with staff who are trained, competent, and committed to treating tenants as human beings.

Housing is a human right. And until ARHA begins treating it that way, this cycle of neglect and corruption will continue. Please — put tenants first, because we cannot survive another decade of this.

Thank you.