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**Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515**

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August 8, 2016

The Honorable Julian Castro
Secretary of Housing and Urban Development
451 7th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20410

Dear Secretary Castro:

I am writing to you today on an urgent matter. Early this morning at the Eureka Gardens apartment complex located in my congressional district in Jacksonville, Florida, three gunmen fired more than 50 rounds of ammunition into a group of residents. It is being reported that seven people were hit; and two of those shot were in critical condition, while five others were listed in stable condition. According to local news reports, 'Sgt. Shawn Coarsey of the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office said a group of eight to 10 people were sitting outside one of the apartment buildings when three men approached and opened fire with a rifle and a pistol' (Channel 4 News, Jacksonville, Florida).

As the federally elected representative of Florida's 5th congressional district, I am requesting that the Department of Housing and Urban Development immediately provide increased security at the housing facility at Eureka Gardens and at the facility of Washington Heights, also located in Jacksonville. I am strongly urging that 24 hour surveillance be provided at both HUD facilities, as well as round the clock police security. Currently, I understand that there are patrols that oversee these facilities, yet what is clearly needed is 24 hour security police for the complexes, as it has been clearly demonstrated today that the current roaming patrols are insufficient. Both of these security provisions are essential and need to be included in the contract(s) when these properties are transferred to their new owners in the near future.

In addition, the complexes are in desperate need of secure gates, as well as a dramatic upgrade of their current surveillance cameras, which would permit the cameras to access all angles of the buildings. I would also like to request a briefing on this matter as soon as I return to Washington following the August congressional recess. Beyond a doubt, we want to do everything possible to ensure the safety of our residents.