



Boston City Council

ED FLYNN

Councilor - District 2

Michelle Wu, Mayor of Boston
One City Hall Square, Suite 500
Boston, MA 02201

May 18, 2026

Dear Mayor Wu,

On May 11, 2026, the Boston Housing Authority (BHA) was fined \$363,000 (with a reduction to 1%, amounting to \$3,630) as a result of the investigation into the Ruth Barkley Apartments' elevator failures in the South End. I'm grateful to the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board for taking these public safety violations and quality of life issues involving the BHA seriously. It is well known that elevator failures have been reported across the entire BHA system in Boston. Please see the hearing minutes here:

<https://www.mass.gov/doc/ruth-barkley-apartments-19-monsignor-reynolds-way-boston-c23-078-fine-hearing-packet-0/download>

Additionally, I filed a 17F on elevator safety issues at Ruth Barkley Apartments in January. To date, the request for information has not been provided to me by BHA Administrator Kenzie Bok. We cannot turn our back on seniors, persons with disabilities, communities of color, immigrant neighbors and low-income residents. This is a civil rights issue.

At this time, I am respectfully requesting a full investigation into any and all BHA properties with an elevator, including Ruth Barkley Apartments. BHA and its contractors must be held fully accountable for every elevator failure, and all related complaints must be promptly reported to the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board. Residents have repeatedly shared that these persistent breakdowns leave them feeling unsafe, unwanted, neglected and forgotten. Over the last two years, I have held City Council hearings where seniors and persons with disabilities shared heartbreaking stories - being unable to make appointments, pick up medication, or make it to their unit to use the restroom. We all know that is not right and unacceptable.

With continued safety and quality of life concerns related to elevators in public housing across the city, I continue to call for the City of Boston to establish a BHA Elevator Safety Commission. As I advocated with my resolution in February, this Commission may be composed of representatives from the BHA Task Force, as well as representatives from BHA leadership, the Boston Fire Department, the Inspectional Services Department, the Disabilities Commission, a City Council member, and a representative from the elevator maintenance industry. Please note I have offered to Chair this Commission because we can no longer ignore these dangerous public safety issues across the City of Boston.

Sincerely,

Ed Flynn
Boston City Councilor, District 2