

OFFERED BY COUNCILOR ED FLYNN



CITY OF BOSTON IN CITY COUNCIL

ORDER FOR A HEARING TO DISCUSS THE STATUS OF THE ELEVATORS AT THE BOSTON HOUSING AUTHORITY (BHA) RUTH BARKLEY APARTMENTS

WHEREAS: In recent years, aging elevators at Boston Housing Authority (BHA) developments have posed public safety concerns. Residents reported frequent breakdowns, being stuck in elevators, elevators skipping floors, and prolonged periods of disrepair. There are increasing concerns that these conditions violate federal and state laws, including the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA); *and*

WHEREAS: Over the last two years, tenants at the Ruth Barkley Apartments in the South End reported frequent elevator breakdowns, with multiple elevators facing long-term outages. In December 2024, residents complained that two of the elevators at the complex had been out of service for a year while another had been operating on and off since Thanksgiving Day. Last year, due to an elevator failure on the Tuesday before Thanksgiving for two days through the holiday morning, many residents at Ruth Barkley apartments were forced to alter and cancel plans with their families - nevermind the inability to go about their daily responsibilities like appointments or picking up prescriptions during that period of time; *and*

WHEREAS: Due to these outages, residents, including seniors and persons with disabilities shared the challenges of not being able to go about their daily lives, such as getting groceries, picking up medication, staying active, going to medical, family and social appointments, and accessing basic services. A resident missed two chemotherapy sessions as a result of the elevator outage, and residents on higher floors complained of the isolation and negative impact that the prolonged outages had on their physical and mental health; *and*

WHEREAS: In January 2025, the BHA reported that it has put a bid out for a design contract for the modernisation of eight elevators at the Ruth Barkley Apartment. It also reported that it has offered transfers to households who are concerned with continuing to rely on a single elevator cab; *and*

WHEREAS: Elevator access is essential for our seniors and persons with disabilities. It is imperative that BHA continues to communicate these plans and protocols in a timely manner to residents, and ensure that residents do not continue to miss critical check ups, screenings and appointments; *and*

NOW THEREFORE BE IT ORDERED:

That the appropriate Committee of the Boston City Council holds a hearing to discuss the latest status of the BHA Elevator Modernisation at the Ruth Barkley Apartments and plans to accommodate those who need to go to critical

appointments during elevator outages. Representatives from the Boston Housing Authority and other relevant and interested parties shall be invited to attend.

Filed in Council: January 30, 2026