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## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **BUILDING COLLAPSES IN KOREATOWN OWNED BY NOTORIOUS LANDLORD – FRANK McHUGH ONE OF THE LARGEST LANDOWNERS IN LOS ANGELES**

On Sunday, January 18<sup>th</sup>, a building collapsed in Koreatown and tax records reveal that the four-unit building is owned by Frank McHugh. Frank McHugh, one of the largest landlords in Los Angeles, owns over 170 residential buildings with an estimated tenant population of 6,500. Including buildings where he is also the mortgagor, an estimated population of over 8,000 reside in “McHughville.” McHughville is worth an estimated \$200 million.

McHugh’s empire is concentrated in the Pico-Union and South LA communities, areas with some of the oldest building stock in Los Angeles. The average age of his buildings is 79 years. The cause of the building collapse, located at 1624 S. Westmoreland Avenue, is still undetermined.

“This unfortunate incident is just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to landlord neglect,” says SAJE organizing director, Davin Corona. “We’ve visited over 70 McHugh buildings and they’re all in deplorable condition. Many seniors and children live in his buildings, and McHugh has not taken seriously his responsibility to protect the health and safety of all of his tenants.”

On June 26, 2008, tenants went public on a campaign against McHugh demanding “Repairs, Respect and Reparations.” In October, over 50 of McHugh’s tenants traveled to his home in Marina del Rey to award him the “Worst Landlord of the Year in Los Angeles Award.”

McHugh has been a source of ire for Los Angeles housing advocates for years. He has evicted over 550 families and over 40 civil suits have been filed against him for habitability violations. On December 11, 2008, as a result from a City Attorney’s criminal complaint, McHugh was sentenced to 5 years probation, ordered to pay over \$14,000.00 in costs and fines, make \$60,000 in charitable contributions, and ordered to divest from all rental property interests in Los Angeles within 3 years.

McHugh tenants have filed numerous health and housing complaints within the last year. In November, with assistance from Inner City Law Center, tenants filed a habitability lawsuit on 275 Witmer St., 90026. Tenants plan on filing more complaints and civil suits on additional McHugh buildings.

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