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MARTIN PROPERTIES
1441 N. NORTHLAKE WAY, SUITE 208
SEATTLE, WA 98103
VOICE 206-632-2894 FAX 206-632-2895
MOBILE 206-669-6550
gbricemartin@comcast.net

June 8, 2010

Hon. City Council
City of Burien
400 SW 152nd
Burien, WA 98166

Re: Multi-family fire alarm requirements

Greetings:

Kindly consider the following in your attention to the new alarm requirements.

-The cost, at approximately \$5,000 per unit, is simply beyond the means of most owners. They don't have the cash and it is not possible to borrow the money due to the current credit market. Furthermore, nearly all multi-family financing prohibits the incurrence of secondary debt. The cost in new construction would be far less than retro-fitting.

-For the typical apartment building, the cost represents the net cash flow of the building for four to eight years. Many owners depend on this cash flow for their family needs or retirement income. I do not think it extreme to refer to such an imposition as confiscatory.

-The cost/benefit ratio is unjustified. The number of lives, if any, which might be saved is minute compared to the expense.

-My observation is that most apartment fire safety issues stem from tenant ignorance. For examples, I see furniture placed against baseboard heaters, batteries removed from smoke detectors, misuse of barbecues, illegal installation of locks on bedroom doors (by tenants), and misuse of extension cords.

-I would like to suggest that in lieu of these expensive alarm systems that a fund be established for the education of tenants. Please understand that many of our residents are immigrants who are unfamiliar with our building systems, and have not grown up with the training and education in fire safety that is ubiquitous in our communities. I think the

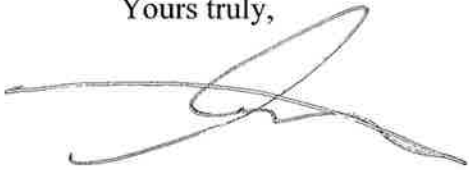
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CFTR: 06/21/10

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apartment operators and the Rental Housing Association would embrace a fee to pay the cost. We would certainly cooperate fully in assuring that tenants receive such materials. Such a program would prevent more fires and save more lives than the alarms proposed.

Thank you for your consideration.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. Brice Martin'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the top and a long horizontal stroke extending to the left.

G. Brice Martin
Martin Properties