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Columbus City Attorney Zach Klein Announces \$1.5M Tenant Settlement Approved in Latitude Five25 Case

Says that agreement puts money back in the pockets of tenants and sends a clear message that landlords will be held accountable for operating problem properties in the City of Columbus

COLUMBUS, OH—Columbus City Attorney Zach Klein issued a statement today as an agreement was approved in the Environmental Court outlining a settlement payment structure for the former tenants of the Latitude Five25 Apartments on the east side of Columbus. The agreement between the City, lender and representatives of the former tenants will see \$1.5 million in insurance proceeds eventually transferred to a Tenant Fund held by Legal Aid, which will then be distributed to former tenants of the towers.

“The City, County and community partners have worked together over the past year—far beyond what is typically done in cities across the nation—to provide critical resources to tenants, run this problem landlord out of town, and ultimately deliver a significant win for those whose lives were turned upside down on Christmas morning 2022. This agreement is a major next step to seeing money put back in the pockets of tenants and sends a clear message that bad landlords operating unsafe, unsanitary properties in the City of Columbus will be held accountable for deplorable living conditions,” said **Columbus City Attorney Zach Klein**.

"We're grateful to the city, county and Lument for their commitment to ensuring that families who were evacuated on Christmas Day will receive some compensation for what they've been through. While this certainly doesn't undo the harm done, it is a step towards making things right for tenants who lost their homes and all of their possessions due to a bad-acting landlord," said **Melissa Benson, senior managing attorney of the housing team at Legal Aid of Southeast and Central Ohio**.

City Attorney Klein noted that the Legal Aid of Southeast and Central Ohio negotiated the deal on behalf of former tenants. Details on the notification of tenants, access to settlement funds and timelines for payment are also under the purview of Legal Aid.