

**For Immediate Release
MEDIA ADVISORY**

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**JUDGE ORDERS LANDLORD'S LAWYER TO MEET WITH
EVICTED ALAMEDA TENANTS**

Tenants hold Press Conference, Protests and Tour of Slum Conditions
While Meetings go on

**Wednesday, October 20 at Noon, Harbor Island Apartments
433 Buena Vista Avenue, Alameda**

(Alameda, CA October 19, 2004)—On Wednesday, when long-time resident, **Isolina Cadle**, 58, sits down with the lawyer for Fifteen Group, the company that owns her run-down apartment complex in Alameda, she'll know just what she needs. "I don't have anyplace else to go," says the former Special Education classroom aide. "I'm disabled with arthritis, my son just graduated from U.C Davis and has only landed part-time temp work. We don't have money for security deposits and moving. We need our home."

On Wednesday, for ten hours starting at 8 a.m., Fifteen Group's attorney, **Mark Hartney**, will be meeting with residents such as Cadle to make sure they won't be homeless when they are evicted on November 3rd. He has to. **U.S. District Judge William Alsup** ordered these unprecedented all-day meetings last Thursday after the City of Alameda filed a suit to block the evictions. But while the lawyer sits down with anguished tenants in the office, just outside residents, community members, and city officials will join together for a press conference to make sure the community's needs are heard.

For the 156 families still living in Alameda's Harbor Island Apartments, home is looking more and more like an abandoned ghost town. Every other door is boarded shut. Garbage litters the laundry rooms and mold stains the ceilings. Employing a strategy of "neglect and evict," the owners, **Ian and Mark Sanders** of Miami Beach are driving their tenants away by the hundreds. In July, they issued eviction notices to all of Harbor Island's 386 families; today only 156 are left. Of those, almost 50% receive Section 8 housing vouchers to help pay for the rents that start at \$1100/month. Residents here are stuck--few apartments in Alameda accept the vouchers, and families don't want to remove their children from Alameda schools.

"The Sanders want to tear apart the largest family housing complex in Alameda," says **Lorraine Lilley**, Co-Chair of the Harbor Island Tenant's Association. "400 of these units are now vacant and can be renovated in phases. We want to work with the owners to keep our community and homes in tact." If successful, this will be one of the largest mass evictions in the city's history, effectively wiping out Alameda's largest

concentration of African Americans and people of color. The owners say they want to launch a \$15 million renovation of the complex and are worried about the safety of the children, but in 2002, Fifteen Group renovated Building 15 with residents living right alongside the construction. “This is really the Sanders’ grab for more money at the expense of working people,” says Lilley. “It’s about those \$900,000 homes that just went up across the street.”

“The broader community is appalled by these evictions,” states **Rev. Michael Yoshii**, Vice Chairperson of Renewed Hope, an advocacy group for affordable housing in Alameda. “These unfair business practices shouldn’t be tolerated in our town. These long-term Alameda residents are nurses, health care workers, teachers—people who care for others. Now it’s time for others to care for them.”

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SCHEDULE FOR WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 20:

Noon – Press Conference in front of Complex Office, 433 Buena Vista Avenue
Families, City Councilperson, Housing Advocate will speak

12:30 – Tour of slum conditions inside complex;

8-6 p.m. – Mark Hartney, Fifteen Group Attorney on site to meet with residents

DIRECTIONS FROM ALAMEDA TUBE:

Take Webster through Tube; turn Right on Atlantic Ave; at 3rd light turn left; curve left onto Buena Vista Avenue.

KEY CONTACTS

Mark and Ian Sanders, owners

Fifteen Group
1680 Michigan Avenue
Miami Beach, FL 33139
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Web site: www.fam15.com

Alameda City Council:

Mayor Beverly Johnson (bjohnson@ci.alameda.ca.us)
Tony Daysog (tdaysog@ci.alameda.ca.us)
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Renewed Hope (Housing Advocates)

Rev. Michael Yoshii 510-522-2688
Tom Matthews, Chair 510-522-2073

Harbor Island Tenants Association

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Harbor Island Apartment Resident

Isolina Cadle, 58, partially disabled Special Ed. Paraprofessional, Alameda Unified School District 510-846-3228 cell; home: 510-521-6885