



Statement from Renters United Philadelphia on the March 29, 2023 Shooting of a Tenant by the Landlord Tenant Officer

Renters United Philadelphia stands with Angel Davis, her family and friends, and all renters at Girard Court Apartments and other Odin Properties' buildings who have faced the trauma and violence of eviction. We are joining other Housing Justice organizations in taking action to respond to this unjust violence.

This violent incident makes it clear to us that protecting wealthy landlords' profit and property matters more in this City than protecting the lives of Black women and renters. We are tired of being treated as disposable. We are enraged that a Landlord Tenant Officer privately contracted by a large corporate landlord shot Angel Davis in the head. As working class renters in Philadelphia, we know that what happened to Ms. Davis could have happened to any one of us. Many of us have experienced evictions or lockouts and we know it is always traumatizing to be forcibly displaced from our homes and put out onto the street. We believe that displacement is wrong, especially the [disproportionately high rates](#) of displacement of Black Philadelphia renters. We can only imagine what Ms. Davis is going through now that she is facing homelessness while recovering from head trauma with no support or resources from the City.

Armed private contractors who are profiting off of displacement and do not have to disclose information to the public should not be forcing renters from their homes. Eviction is a business in Philadelphia. The lack of oversight and transparency related to the "Landlord Tenant Officer"—a for-profit institution, largely unique to Philadelphia, that hires private contractors to carry out evictions and lockouts—is unacceptable. There is no requirement that the Landlord Tenant Officer or privately contracted Deputy Landlord Tenant Officers undergo any specific training, and there is no structure for accountability or renter oversight of their work.

We should not be living in squalor while our landlords get rich off of our backs and face no consequences. We believe that paying rent should guarantee us safe and healthy homes, rather than lining the pockets of unresponsive landlords. But the health and safety of Philadelphia's poor and working class renters in this City are far from a priority. Last year alone, seventeen renters, eleven of whom were children, died from fatal fires caused by unsafe conditions in [Fairmount](#) and [Kensington](#) and a carbon monoxide [leak](#) in a West Philadelphia apartment building. We deal with deplorable conditions in our homes every day, and we know that Ms. Davis and other tenants at Girard Court Apartments and Odin Properties have also requested repairs for issues that remain unaddressed.

We need the department of Licenses & Inspections and City Council to act now to hold Odin Properties accountable for this violence and inspect all their rental properties, to stop all evictions by armed Landlord Tenant Officers, and to prioritize the health and safety of Angel Davis and all renters to prevent another tragedy like this one. We renters have a human right to safe, healthy, quality, affordable housing, and we should not have to live in fear that we will be the victim of the next tragedy.