LDF and ACLU of Michigan Continue to Fight for Flint Residents Once Again at Risk of Losing Homes

This week, a Michigan state oversight board struck down a local moratorium on the issuance of property liens in Flint connected to unpaid bills for contaminated water. The result is that thousands of residents are once again at risk of losing their homes. The NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF) and the ACLU of Michigan issued the following joint statement in response:

“Despite the fact that it has been unsafe to drink unfiltered tap water in Flint for more than three years, the state Receivership Transition Advisory Board (RTAB) has ruled that the City and County must still receive payment from more than 8,000 Flint residents for outstanding water bills, threatening residents with foreclosure if they do not comply. This is plainly immoral and potentially illegal. No one should be expected to pay for poisoned water, but that is exactly what the state is demanding. The Flint City Council did the right thing in voting to stop the issuance of tax liens for these unpaid bills at the urging of LDF and the ACLU of Michigan. The State has now overridden the decision of the city’s elected officials, a practice that in the past did not serve them well. The people of Flint have endured enough. Losing their homes because they lost access to a basic necessity – clean drinking water – is completely unacceptable and compounds the physical and psychological harm Flint residents have already suffered for over three years. The State must reverse itself and devise a solution to this problem, one that does not adversely affect the economic viability of a city that cannot afford to lose residents or resident-owned homes. We will continue to pressure the State and seek other ways to put an end to the ongoing tragedies caused by the State’s dereliction of duty to its residents.”

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Founded in 1940, the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF) is the nation’s first civil and human rights law organization and has been completely separate from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) since 1957—although LDF was originally founded by the NAACP and shares its commitment to equal rights. LDF’s Thurgood Marshall Institute is a multi-disciplinary and collaborative hub within LDF that launches targeted campaigns and undertakes
innovative research to shape the civil rights narrative. In media attributions, please refer to us as the NAACP Legal Defense Fund or LDF.