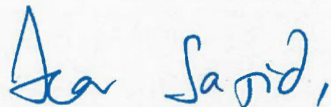


MAYOR OF LONDON

Rt Hon Sajid Javid MP

Secretary of State for Housing, Communities
and Local Government
Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local
Government
2 Marsham Street
London SW1P 4DF

Date: 06 FEB 2018



I am writing regarding my concerns about the costs of removing Aluminium Composite Material (ACM) cladding from privately owned residential high-rise buildings in London.

As we know, a range of ACM cladding assemblies failed large-scale tests carried out by the Building Research Establishment (BRE) over the summer of 2017, following the tragic Grenfell Tower fire. The large-scale tests revealed that many residential buildings in London are clad in flammable and dangerous materials, putting both residents and visitors at risk. Given the results of the large-scale tests, ACM cladding must be removed from high-rise residential buildings in London as soon as possible, and replaced with safe, non-flammable cladding.

However, the issue of who is responsible for the cost of removing ACM cladding from privately owned residential high-rise buildings in London is becoming increasingly urgent. I am therefore writing to request that the Government covers the immediate costs of removing and replacing cladding on these buildings, to prevent lengthy legal disputes over who is responsible for the costs from delaying the works and leaving residents and visitors at risk.

I am sure you will be aware of the Citiscape complex in Croydon, which is clad in ACM panels similar to those which were on Grenfell Tower. Given the danger this cladding assembly presents to both life and property, it is essential that it is removed and replaced as soon as possible. However, the building owner, Proxima GR Properties, has insisted that it is not obliged to cover the costs of the work and that leaseholders will be required to pay approximately £2 million between them to cover the costs of removing and replacing the cladding. Leaseholders have been warned that this amount will continue to increase the longer they delay payment.

Whilst I am glad to see building owners taking steps to improve the safety of their buildings, I am very concerned about the significant costs leaseholders are facing. Many leaseholders in London will be unable to afford to pay for these works and could end up losing their homes as a result. It is also likely that lengthy legal disputes over who is responsible for the costs will end up delaying the works, resulting in dangerous cladding remaining on buildings for an extended period.

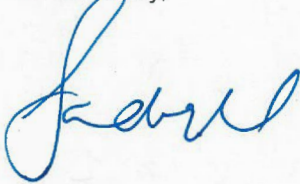
MAYOR OF LONDON

Given the importance of ensuring that all residential high-rise buildings in London are as safe as possible, I am sure you will agree that we cannot afford to let legal disputes over cost delay the process of removing ACM cladding and replacing it with a safe, non-flammable alternative. Furthermore, whilst the Government has previously publicly indicated that building owners rather than leaseholders should cover the costs of these works, it is yet to take any action to assist or protect leaseholders who find themselves faced with a substantial bill to pay for these works.

It is likely that there will be more cases like that of the Citiscape complex in Croydon, in which privately owned residential high-rise buildings are found to have ACM cladding. It is therefore essential that the Government provides interim funding to pay for the removal and replacement of the cladding, to ensure the safety of residents and visitors in these buildings.

While I have seen your public comments on this topic, I am very concerned that the Government is not doing anything to help leaseholders caught in this way. I am calling on you to act now and do more to help leaseholders of privately-owned residential blocks, both to protect their immediate safety and to ensure they are not forced to pay massive costs that are threatening many with severe hardship.

Yours sincerely,



Sadiq Khan
Mayor of London

Cc: Jo Johnson MP, Minister for London
Rt Hon Gavin Barwell, Chief of Staff, 10 Downing Street