



# National Association for Child Window Safety



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*Secretary Shaun Donovan  
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development  
451 7th Street S.W., Washington, DC 20410*

Dear Sir:

Each year 5000 children fall through window screens and are killed or permanently injured. Most of these children are less than four years old. One such fall began what has become a national campaign to solve this problem.

While investigating the best means possible to address the problem, our research discovered that the HUD specified “Light Type Security Screen” provided the most effective protection needed to not only protect windows, but by far the most acceptable means to insure that children would be safe. Soon after the subsequent installation of these screens on existing affordable housing buildings, it became clear that there was an additional benefit; window maintenance on those buildings was reduced by nearly 98%.

This “Child Safety Screen” became the basis for campaigns in several states to require safety devices on all multi-unit housing. Some have been successful, but it is clear that a more successful strategy is not to fight this fight in each state individually but to address the issue at the National level and from the source of the original idea for “Child Safety Screens”. Not through further legislation, but through the original source of some funding for almost every multi-unit affordable housing development in the country; HUD itself.

We have met with some members of congress and their staff to inform them of our wish to have your office administratively redefine “Light Type Security Screen” as “Light Type Security and Child Safety Screen”, and then require it on HUD financed new construction and major renovations. It was suggested that we make a formal request to you for this action. Such an action would lead to much the same result as what has occurred with Smoke and CO Detectors, required in multi-unit affordable housing at first, but now found in almost every home in America.

We request that you help us in this campaign to save children by the following actions:

1. Change the “HUD SECTION 08321 SECURITY SCREENS AND DOORS SPECIFICATION AID” specifications to read:

**Type of Security and Child Safety Screens (Frames and Screening):** This HUD Guide Specification includes types of security screens as defined by ANSI/SMA 6001. This standard includes performance requirements based on an impact test, a sag test, and forced entry resistance test for each type. The standard includes the following description of the purpose and requirements for the screen:

**Light Type:** For protection against *child window falls* and glass breakage in upper story windows, or where forced entry is not a problem. Screen (frame and screening) shall withstand 34 N-m (25 pound force

foot) impact test, 13.6 kg (30 pound) sag test, and 13.6 kg (30 pound) forced entry resistance test. 16 by 16 mesh, 0.46 mm (0.018 inch) diameter stainless steel mesh is an approved screening material.

2. Require that "Light Type Security and Child Safety Screens" be installed in upper story windows of all HUD financed construction of family type housing development, or HUD financing for major renovation of existing family type housing.

In the last seven years these "Safety Screens" have been installed on projects as disparate as American Indian Housing on Franklin Avenue in Minneapolis to the Chicago Housing Authority Altgeld Gardens project where President Obama served as a community organizer. In all cases they saved 98% of window maintenance costs while at the same time saving children from life threatening falls. It is only logical that anything that saves money, while at the same time it is saving the lives and safety of thousands of children, should be desired and the goal of all communities and our society as a whole.

"We measure the quality of our community by the way we provide for our children, our elders and our handicapped. It should be our intent to build community by laying a foundation on such principles and to organize its structure to guarantee the safety and happiness of our most vulnerable."

This is a non-partisan issue; both Democrats as well as responsible Republicans do agree that saving children while at the same time saving money is a good idea. HUD's mission has always been to provide safe, stable, affordable housing for our people. Nothing could be more affordable in the long run, or provide more acceptable safety of our babies and children. It is simply the logical and right thing to do.

We are grateful for the support of our Senators and Congressmen and look forward to your support as well. Something as simple as changing the verbiage on a "specification" and requiring a budget saving measure before financing a project can make a world of difference to the family of a child who might be saved. We need to make safe quality housing a priority for every child in America.

Thank you for your assistance in this.

Respectfully,

Jim Graham

cc: Senator Amy Klobuchar  
Senator Al Franken  
Senator Tom Harkin  
Congressman Bruce Bailey