Dear Mayor Landrieu,

As we prepare for the launch of the second season of HBOs Treme, not a day goes by when we are not warmed by the welcoming attitude of New Orleanians and amazed by the indomitable spirit of a place that has overcome so much. We thank you for the work you and your administration have done to make production here not only possible but also pleasurable.

For us to tell the story of this city, we knew it was crucial that we be here, on the ground, rather than on some soundstage in Los Angeles or Toronto. New Orleans has an authenticity that cannot be faked. Similarly, when choosing a backdrop for our promotional poster (copy enclosed), we looked for buildings that would help establish an unmistakable sense of place. We chose a row of shotgun houses in the 2700 block of South Derbigny Street, between Washington and Fourth streets, near Taylor Park. These structures were in disrepair to be sure, but they were perfect for us because they showed both the burden and the promise of this great city, the threat of collapse and the hope of renewal.

It has come to our attention that the city plans to demolish these buildings. Our hope is that a way can be found to renovate and not destroy them. These houses have appeared around the globe in advertisements for the show and the DVD set. In that way, they have attained something of an iconic status. New Orleans has successfully restored other similarly dilapidated rows of shotguns (see the 600 block of Gen. Taylor for but one example). What a powerful message it would send about the resiliency and recovery of the city for this block to be restored and transformed into desirable homes for returning residents.

We urge you to work with the National Trust for Historic Preservation, Builders for Hope or a similar organization to rebuild these houses and return them to commerce.

Sincerely,

David Simon, executive producer

Eric Overmyer, executive prouder

Nina Noble, executive producer

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