

KRIS MAYES ATTORNEY GENERAL STATE OF ARIZONA

March 11, 2025

The Honorable Pam Bondi United States Attorney General 950 Pennsylvania Avenue NW Washington, D.C. 20530

Dear Attorney General Bondi,

Protecting renters from price-gouging and market manipulation should be a bipartisan priority. Housing affordability is one of the most pressing issues facing American families, and it demands action at every level of government. That's why I urge the Department of Justice (DOJ) to continue its antitrust lawsuit ¹ against RealPage, Inc. and several major corporate landlords for allegedly colluding to illegally inflate rents through an algorithmic price-fixing scheme. Millions of renters—including many in Arizona's two largest cities—have been harmed by this unlawful conduct.

In Phoenix and Tucson, rents are 76% higher in Phoenix since 2016 and 30% higher in Tucson in just the past few years. These increases aren't simply a result of supply and demand – they are the product of deliberate, illegal actions that manipulated the rental market.

Rather than competing, these landlords allegedly coordinated to artificially inflate rents using RealPage's so-called "revenue management" software. The company collected sensitive pricing and occupancy data from landlords, then used an algorithm to set rental pricing—promising to "outpace the market in good times and bad." Even worse, RealPage allegedly trained landlords to conceal its role, instructing them to mislead tenants about how rents were set.

This scheme stifled competition, created a de facto rental monopoly, and drove up housing costs for working families. That's why my office sued nine corporate landlords and RealPage for price-fixing in Arizona. But this is a national crisis, which is why the DOJ, and 10 other states also took legal action. This federal lawsuit must continue.

¹ https://www.justice.gov/archives/opa/pr/justice-department-sues-realpage-algorithmic-pricing-scheme-harms-millions-american-renters

I intend to press forward with the case I filed in Arizona against Real Page, but I also urge the Trump administration, through the DOJ, to see its case through. RealPage and its co-conspirators engaged in unfair and anticompetitive practices that forced families to pay artificially high rents at a time when many are struggling to get by. Addressing this issue is essential to making housing more affordable—not just in Arizona, but across the country.

Pursuing this case aligns with President Trump's **Executive Order**² to Deliver Emergency **Price Relief for American Families and Defeat the Cost-of-Living Crisis.** Federal antitrust laws are powerful tools to dismantle monopolistic practices and restore fairness to the housing market. The DOJ must send a clear message: collusion in the housing market will not be tolerated.

As Arizona's Attorney General, I've seen firsthand the damage caused by unchecked corporate greed in housing. My office is leading the fight at the state level, but federal action is critical. The DOJ's lawsuit could deter future price-fixing schemes, lower rents, and ensure fairness in the rental market nationwide.

As Florida Attorney General, you championed <u>antitrust</u>³ enforcement, and during your Senate confirmation hearing, you committed to making it a DOJ priority. Your leadership and dedication to ensuring a fair and competitive marketplace are commendable, and I am confident you will bring that same commitment to holding price-fixing landlords accountable.

Now is the time to follow through. Stand with hard working Americans who have been cheated by a rigged system. They deserve nothing less.

Respectfully,

Kris Mayes

Arizona Attorney General

 $^{^2\} https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/01/delivering-emergency-price-relief-for-american-families-and-defeating-the-cost-of-living-crisis/$

³ https://oig.hhs.gov/fraud/enforcement/attorney-general-bondi-joins-multistate-antitrust-action-against-generic-drug-companies/