

February 24, 2026

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is John Miller, and my mother Joan Miller was a resident at Augsburg Lutheran Village from 2014 until her death on December 4, 2020. Our experience with Augsburg's Administration and some of their workers has been troubling. In 2020, my mother awakened from a nap to see a worker from Augsburg in her bedroom. Her front door had been locked. When my mother asked what he was doing there, the worker said he just wanted to see if she was all right and left. When we reported this event to Augsburg, they thanked us, but no actions were taken.

After my mother's death, we had consistently frustrating interactions with Augsburg regarding their lack of effort to sell my mother's apartment. When I was cleaning out my mother's apartment of her belongings, I found that food and drinks were being stored in her refrigerator. This was after I had cleaned out the refrigerator of my mother's remaining food. It seemed that someone was using the unit (an end unit) as storage. This also indicated that someone had been in the apartment and easily could have stolen items belonging to my mother.

Despite the contract indicating that Augsburg needed to contact us periodically regarding the status of my mother's apartment, we received only one email from them in 5 years.

Multiple times, I drove to Augsburg in an attempt to meet with people regarding the situation. On the occasions when someone met with me, I was always told the same thing: "we're trying to sell your mother's apartment, but have yet to get a buyer." On one occasion the sales manager indicated that he felt it was because my mother's apartment was the only one on her wing without a washer and dryer. We asked about installing one so that it was comparable to others on the floor, but were told that "contractors had been in and that such an addition was impossible."

On July 22, 2022, again I visited Augsburg and asked to see the apartment. What I found was appalling and enraging. There were mouse and bug traps on the floor. The walls had mold stains on them. There was no top to the oven. There was food and drink in the refrigerator. (I have these pictures still). Plainly the apartment had never been shown to prospective buyers in the 19 months since my mother's passing, but seemed to be being used in some capacity by workers at the facility. Outraged, I demanded that we be given the entrance fee specified in the contract my mother had signed, as Augsburg had not lived up to its end of the contractual agreement.

On Oct 6, 2022, Augsburg sent me a check for \$10,000. They indicated that this was in gratitude for my mother's donation of masks to Augsburg residents during the Covid pandemic. The person I dealt with was Cyndi Walters, the President and CEO of National Lutheran Communities and Services.

In the next three years, I did not contact Augsburg. It was too painful. My mother was a devout Christian who chose Augsburg because of its religious affiliation. She was the most moral, loving person I have ever known. I resigned myself to the fact that Augsburg was simply a bottom line, money-making organization. I just wanted to put that chapter behind me.

It was during this period that I received the only communication from Augsburg, indicating that my mother's apartment had not been sold. I received an email on March 26, 2025; it was from Tina Minio, the same employee I had predominantly met with since my mother's death. It struck me as odd, as they had never been proactive in communicating. On October 1, I received a voicemail from Augsburg's home office (I still have it) indicating that they had tried to reach me and my 3 siblings, but all numbers had been disconnected. When I called back, the woman on the phone was interested in offering a settlement of 40% to void the contract. She told me that I could counteroffer and gave me a figure she thought the "higher ups" would accept. Anxious to end this affair, my siblings and I accepted a settlement for \$44,000. In the end, we were due \$80,400 according to the contract and accepted \$54,000.

Our experience with Augsburg was horrendous and I am appreciative of Senator Charles Sydnor's efforts to explore legislative remedies to this sort of behavior from organizations like Augsburg.