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“Should you be paying for Bank of America’s Mess?” photo exhibit to be unveiled in front of Bank of America branch in downtown Springfield, Massachusetts on Thursday.

SPRINGFIELD, MA—On Thursday November 17th, Springfield No One Leaves and residents affected by the foreclosure crisis will unveil a powerful new photo exhibit called “Should you be paying for Bank of America’s mess?” The exhibit will be unveiled at a press conference in front of Bank of America’s downtown offices at One Monarch Place in Springfield at 12:00 pm Eastern time.

“This exhibit shows the devastation being caused by Bank of America and the other big banks when they foreclose and evict families and then leave homes vacant after foreclosure,” explains Joe Oliverio, a Springfield resident and one of the artists who helped put the exhibit together.

The exhibit is a collection of images of vacant and abandoned homes that are owned by Bank of America after foreclosure in Springfield, MA. One image of 74 Euclid Avenue, at which Bank of America became the owner in September 2010, shows extensive fire damage that occurred in a fire following the foreclosure.

“Bank leave homes to sit vacant and be destroyed, destabilizing the entire neighborhood and hurting property values,” explains Springfield resident and Bank Tenant member Candejah Pink. “Even worse, its us, the taxpayer, that foots the bill for the destruction that they are causing. They leave these homes to be dangerous playgrounds for our children, and then make us pay for their mess. We’re not taking that anymore!”

Bank of America is the largest member of the Mass Bankers Association (MBA), and one of the largest foreclosing institutions in Springfield. The MBA recently wrote a letter to the city asking the city not to implement what is now the strongest anti-foreclosure legislation in the country. The letter was also signed onto by a number of local financial institutions, but not by any credit unions, People’s United Bank or Peoples Bank.

“The city of Springfield took steps to mitigate the impact of the foreclosure crisis, relieve the financial burden of this crisis on the taxpayer and take back control of our city,” explains City Councilor Amaad Rivera. “Now the MBA, led by Bank of America are threatening of frivolous lawsuit to avoid paying their fair share for the foreclosure crisis they created.”

Following a brief press conference and the unveiling of the exhibit, protesters will march with some of the images to the local branches of United and Hampden banks to demand that they withdraw their names from the MBA’s letter and threatened lawsuit. Springfield residents last week delivered a letter to each of the banks asking them to withdraw their names from the MBA’s letter. Neither Hampden nor United bank has responded.

“These local banks aren’t the one’s sitting on vacant homes and conducting the majority of foreclosures,” says organizer Malcolm Chu. “In fact local banks stand to gain a lot of new customers and business as millions of people remove their money from the big banks. We believe it is in their best interest and the best interest of the community for these banks to disassociate with the likes of Bank of America and remove their names from this frivolous attempt to derail this landmark legislation.”

This action comes just days before a regional march on the Wall Street banks in Springfield planned for Monday November 21 at 11:00 AM. The march will culminate in a non-violent and peaceful civil disobedience action. Residents from through New England, including Boston, Providence, Hartford, Worcester, Lynn, Chelsea and the Berkshires are expected to join with hundreds from Springfield for the march.

For more information see www.springfieldnooneleaves.org