

Communication from Public

Name: Greg Spiegel

Date Submitted: 04/13/2021 05:38 PM

Council File No: 14-0268

Comments for Public Posting: On behalf of Inner City Law Center, we ask the City Council's Housing Committee to adopt Councilmember Raman's proposed amendments to the current draft of the Tenant Anti-Harassment Ordinance (TAHO) and to approve the revised ordinance as soon as possible. Thank you to Councilmember Raman for her thoughtful amendments. We support them and ask the Housing Committee to approve them. Thank you to Councilmember Cedillo for keeping the anti-harassment ordinance on the agenda. Please keep it moving forward because L.A.'s families have never needed it more. L.A.'s renters need a strong anti-harassment ordinance to protect them from illegal displacement. Please pass this ordinance with Councilmember Raman's proposed amendments. In addition to passing this ordinance, it is very important that the City fund HCID to staff and enforce the law so it has the intended impact. Without enforcement, the law won't make a difference. Finally, we ask the Committee to NOT approve amendments that would provide a landlord with a harassment "get-out-of-jail-free" card, such as allowing enforcement actions ONLY if "the landlord fails to remedy within a reasonable period of time." What would it even mean for a landlord to remedy a harassment? Where a landlord physically threatens a tenant using a racist slur, would this mean that the landlord only does it once but doesn't do it again? Would it mean the landlord apologizes or says he was only joking? Is this supposed to have the same effect of the landlord not having harassed at all? Where a landlord cuts off a tenants' hot water to drive them out of their home, does turning the hot water back on mean they never turned it off? Slurs and actions to intimidate are unambiguously wrong. It is wrong the first time it happens. It doesn't become wrong only if it happens again. Ceasing to harass is not the same thing as never having harassed at all. Landlords who harass but then stop are harassers. To find otherwise would undermine any deterrence that the policy would otherwise provide. If the City is finally acknowledging a renter's right to be free of harassment, it must not undercut that right by allowing the landlord one free harassment at the tenants' expense.

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