

Contact Information

Neighborhood Council: Eagle Rock Neighborhood Council

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The Board approved this CIS by a vote of: Yea(10) Nay(0) Abstain(2) Ineligible(0) Recusal(0)

Date of NC Board Action: 07/05/2018

Type of NC Board Action: For

Impact Information

Date: 08/02/2018

Update to a Previous Input: No

Directed To: City Council and Committees

Council File Number: 18-0610

Agenda Date: 07/05/2018

Item Number: IIIA

Summary: The Eagle Rock Neighborhood supports of CF 18-0610 re: Tenants' Right To Counsel Program.

**EAGLE ROCK
NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL**

Lisa Kable Blanchard, President
Becky Newman, Vice President
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**CITY OF
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COMMUNITY IMPACT STATEMENT

July 17, 2018

Los Angeles City Council
Housing Committee
200 N. Spring St.
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Committee Members:

On July 5, 2018, a Brown Act noticed public meeting was held with a quorum of 12 board members present and that by a vote of 10 yes, 0 no, and 2 abstentions, the Eagle Rock Neighborhood Council (ERNC) adopted the following Community Impact Statement concerning Council File 18-0610, Tenants Right to Counsel:

The Eagle Rock Neighborhood Council supports the Tenant's Right to Counsel program proposed by Councilmember Paul Koretz, and seconded by C. Herb Wesson.

Despite an overall decrease in the homeless population, the 2017 Los Angeles Homeless Count showed an increase in those individuals who experienced homelessness for the first time - an increase from 8,044 to 9,322.¹ Most alarming is that 46% of those who experienced homelessness for the first time said it was due to loss of employment or other economic-related issues.² More and more families in Los Angeles are economically burdened especially as the housing affordability crisis worsens,³ all while wages stagnate, leaving those in heavily low wage industries even more vulnerable to economic pressures and most frustratingly, evictions- which have been on the rise.⁴ Councilman Koretz's motion states that over the last year it is estimated 30,000 unlawful detainer (UD) eviction cases have been filed in Los Angeles per year.⁵

We cannot ignore the role that the combined impacts of evictions and unaffordable rental housing have had on exacerbating the homelessness crisis in Los Angeles.⁶ One solution is the creation of a Tenant's Right to Counsel program, proposed by Councilman Paul Koretz (CF 18-0610). Many tenants who have been served an eviction notice to terminate their tenancy have limited access to legal representation.⁷ This proposed program would serve to provide apartment renters faced with eviction or landlord harassment with legal assistance they might not otherwise be able to obtain. The proposal calls for City staff to develop recommendations on developing the Tenant's Right to Counsel program including prospective costs and funding sources and report back to the City Council within 120 days.

¹ Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA)/Los Angeles Times: <http://documents.latimes.com/2018-los-angeles-homeless-count/>

² ibid

³ Hiltzik, Michael. 2018, Los Angeles Times: <http://www.latimes.com/business/hiltzik/la-fi-hiltzik-housing-crisis-20180330-story.html>

⁴ Seigler, Kirk. 2018, Southern California Public Radio: <https://www.npr.org/2018/04/16/601970552/californias-housing-crisis-working-but-on-the-brink-of-homelessness>

⁵ Councilman Paul Koretz. 2018: http://clkrep.lacity.org/online/docs/2018/18-0610_mot_06-22-2018.pdf

⁶ Grynberg, Noah and Tyler Anderson. 2018, Los Angeles Times: <http://www.latimes.com/opinion/livable-city/la-oe-grynberg-anderson-eviction-housing-california-20180323-story.html>

⁷ Inglis, Aimee and Dean Preston. 2018, *California Evictions are Fast and Frequent*: <https://actionnetwork.org/groups/tenants-together/files/23632/download>

If enacted, Los Angeles would not be alone in helping expand the rights of tenants. A Right to Counsel law was approved by voters in San Francisco in June 2018 and in New York City in 2017.⁸ It's time the City of Los Angeles acts to provide the right to counsel as soon as possible for the nearly 60% of Angelinos who are renters.⁹ The ERNC supports CF 18-0610, however would modify the motion to investigate the prospective costs and funding sources for a Tenant's Right to Counsel program to benefit renters whose household income falls below a certain percentage of Federal Poverty Level, i.e. 200%, and can demonstrate that they cannot afford their own legal representation.

Respectfully,

The Eagle Rock Neighborhood Council

cc: Office of Councilmember Jose Huizar (sean.starkey@lacity.org)
DONE % Lorenzo Briceno (lorenzo.briceno@lacity.org)

⁸ National Coalition for a Civil Right to Counsel, 2018: http://civilrighttocounsel.org/major_developments/1179
⁹ Housing and Community Investment Department. 2018, City of Los Angeles: <http://hcidla.lacity.org/renters>