

## Communication from Public

**Name:** Alexander Ferrer

**Date Submitted:** 06/12/2020 10:09 AM

**Council File No:** 19-0623

**Comments for Public Posting:** Councilmembers, My Name is Alexander Ferrer, with Strategic Actions for a Just Economy (SAJE). We Need A Vacancy Tax Now. A Vacancy Tax will provide much needed revenue to the city at a time when revenue sources that the city is most dependent on, like transient occupancy taxes, business licensing, and sales that have been and will be considerably depressed by COVID-19 related economic disruption. Estimates from Blue Sky Consulting, which studied the implementation of a Vacancy Tax policy in Los Angeles suggests that revenue could be as much as \$128 million annually, enough to make up for the projected shortfall of both licensing and transient occupancy. This revenue is desperately needed to fund programs that can help realize a Just Recovery, especially in the production and preservation of housing. There are over 100,000 vacant housing units in the City of Los Angeles according to the most recent census bureau data. This is a substantial amount of units that if released into the rental market could help stem the tide of rent burdening and homelessness that afflict Angelenos. Even in times of “surging construction” the annual production of housing units (just over 10,000) in the city reflects a mere fraction of this total. The persistent crisis of lack of housing supply could be substantially ameliorated by releasing a considerable portion of the units into the market, and far more affordably than through construction. Only approximately 37,000 of the currently vacant units are either for rent or for sale according to the census bureau, leaving over 50,000 units that could potentially be immediately placed into the housing supply. Of those units, nearly 13,000 are reserved “for seasonal, recreational, or occasion use,” a housing category that should not exist in the city at all in times of crisis. There are nearly 2.5 vacant units for each of the 41,2009 unhoused persons counted in LAHSA’s 2020 census. In ordinary times, this is an unimaginable tragedy, reflecting the inevitable result of a housing system set up to enrich speculators, rather than to provide housing. The urgency of housing all Angelenos at this moment is severe, as unhoused people, even when sheltered are extremely vulnerable to COVID-19. Earlier this year, the urgency of this situation was made abundantly clear when families in El Sereno reclaimed publicly owned housing that has long sat vacant. By its nature, a Vacancy Tax helps the city reclaim value from

undesirable potential after effects of the crisis like the eviction of businesses, and persistent rates of commercial and office vacancy. Implementing a Vacancy Tax policy could help stem the massive tide of evictions projected to occur after the expiration of COVID-19 related emergency renter protections by raising the potential costs of residential eviction as well.

## Communication from Public

**Name:** D White

**Date Submitted:** 06/12/2020 05:52 PM

**Council File No:** 19-0623

**Comments for Public Posting:** I am strongly I support of a vacancy tax! Please continue to advance this legislation.

## Communication from Public

**Name:**

**Date Submitted:** 06/12/2020 06:01 PM

**Council File No:** 19-0623

**Comments for Public Posting:** LA has approximately 85,000 to 100,000 empty units and a terrible homelessness problem. With the pandemic and record numbers of unemployment, the housing crisis will only grow more severe. The time for a vacancy tax is long overdue.

## Communication from Public

**Name:** Erinn O'Dear

**Date Submitted:** 06/12/2020 06:24 PM

**Council File No:** 19-0623

**Comments for Public Posting:** I'm writing in support of a vacancy tax. Too often vacancies in LA are due to discriminatory practices, looking for "ideal" single, young tenants, or wealthy overseas investors. There isn't technically a housing shortage, and theoretically the new airbnb regulations should have opened up units, and yet rents have stayed sky high and homelessness rates are up. Families, kids need affordable places to live that won't reject them. BIPOC and disabled Angelinos need affordable places to live that aren't hours from their work. This will bring down rent to closer to what it should be in a healthy marketplace.

## Communication from Public

**Name:** Marie

**Date Submitted:** 06/12/2020 07:34 PM

**Council File No:** 19-0623

**Comments for Public Posting:** Vacancy tax NOW. Put it on the ballot YESTERDAY. Los Angeles has empty units and homeless people. Tax the SHIT out of landlords and investors and rich people with second homes. Do it now, today. It's sickening to think that some have so much, and the torment they're inflicting on others by hoarding can only be rectified little by little, drop by drop. PS It worked in Canada! Let's TRY.

## Communication from Public

**Name:**

**Date Submitted:** 06/12/2020 09:30 PM

**Council File No:** 19-0623

**Comments for Public Posting:** Please move in favor of a vacancy tax. Real Estate companies are hoarding units in order to hold out for inflated rents. This practice is throwing our communities out of balance and needs to be actively discouraged.

## Communication from Public

**Name:** Daniel Tuveson  
**Date Submitted:** 06/12/2020 10:24 PM  
**Council File No:** 19-0623  
**Comments for Public Posting:** Just wanted to give my support for the vacancy tax. If people want to speculate on LA property, there should be some tangible benefit for residents, especially given the housing crisis LA faces. This also seems like it wouldn't be a huge burden on small time landlords, since they already have a strong financial incentive to rent out vacant units.