

## Communication from Public

**Name:** Catherine Baltazar

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**Council File No:** 25-1036

**Comments for Public Posting:** Dear Members of the Housing and Homelessness Committee, My name is Catherine Baltazar. I represent Climate Resolve, a Los Angeles-based nonprofit committed to equitable, sustainable solutions that protect communities from extreme heat. I strongly support the motion for the City of Los Angeles to opt into the Safe Indoor Temperature Policy, requiring landlords to maintain indoor temperatures of 82°F or lower in rental units. 1. Extreme heat is already among the greatest health threats facing Angelenos—and it will only worsen with climate change. Within the City of Los Angeles and across LA County, we see the impacts today: On extreme heat days above 90°F, the City of Los Angeles experiences approximately 1,177 excess emergency room visits for heat-related illnesses, amounting to over half a million ER visits between 2009 and 2018. 2. In LA County, during major heat waves, hospitals see more than 1,500 excess ER visits. 3. Seniors in the region are 2.5 times more likely to die from heat compared to the general population. In the City, formerly redlined neighborhoods are consistently several degrees hotter than wealthier, better-tree-covered areas, and they suffer the greatest burden of heat exposure. 4. As climate change accelerates, the median census tract in LA is projected to face 59 extremely hot days per year by 2050—an increase of ~31 % from historical averages. 5. Nearly half of heat-related fatalities occur indoors, yet many rental units lack adequate cooling or the ability to safely install it (e.g. window AC units). 6. In low-income LA neighborhoods, the health impacts are more severe: during recent heat waves in LA County, people without secure housing were more than 50 times more likely to die of heat than the general population. These figures show that extreme heat is a crisis in LA—and renters are on the frontlines. Adequate indoor cooling must be recognized as a habitability standard, alongside heating. This is not optional comfort—it is a matter of health, safety, and human dignity. Families in older, overcrowded, or poorly ventilated buildings should not be forced to huddle together in one room or flee their homes to find relief. The Renters' Right to Cooling report by SAJE amplifies tenants' stories of heat-related illness—ranging from asthma attacks and headaches to dizziness and insomnia—and documents how many are pushed into costly or insufficient coping strategies like fans, wet clothing, or leaving

home, because landlords refuse or prohibit cooling installations. Landlords—particularly those already benefiting from low property taxes under Proposition 13—should absorb the cost of cooling measures, either through allowable rent adjustments or subsidy programs. Maintaining a safe, habitable home is part of the responsibility they accepted when they entered the housing business. By opting in to the Safe Indoor Temperature Policy, the City of Los Angeles can align its health protections with those already adopted by LA County, standardize renter protections, and send a clear message: extreme heat is a public health emergency that demands urgent, equitable action. I strongly urge you to vote Yes on Agenda Item #3. Thank you for your leadership and for prioritizing the health and safety of all Angelenos. Sincerely, Catherine Baltazar