



January 27, 2026

LA City Councilmembers
Mayor Karen Bass
City of Los Angeles
200 N. Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA

RE: Vote NO on consideration of Council-backed ballot measure to amend Measure ULA and vote NO on the proposed motion itself (Item #19)

Dear LA City Council and Mayor Karen Bass,

We write as members of ACT-LA's Social Housing Leadership Cohort, a group of 20 tenant leaders belonging to 10 organizations and as part of a growing base of Angelenos who have organized for years to win real housing solutions that prioritize social housing and tenant governance. We have been part of the Social housing campaign since before the inception of the campaign and the United to House LA coalition. I urge you to **publicly oppose any motion that would create a City Council-backed ballot measure to amend Measure ULA** in ways that weaken its intent, delay its implementation, or divert it from its core purpose: addressing the housing and homelessness crisis through permanent, structural change-- Social Housing.

Measure ULA did not happen by accident. It is the result of years of organizing, policy development, coalition building, and deep community engagement led by housing justice organizations, tenants, and working class residents. Our Social Housing Cohort took part in a years worth of assemblies where we debated and voted on priorities which lead to ACT-LA's Social housing platform. What you see in the ULA measure reflects our personal experience as tenants who have been displaced, as tenants living in affordable housing developments, as tenants living in Community Land Trusts, and as people who have seen and experienced the housing crisis. We know that traditional affordable housing is not enough to get ahead of this crisis and secure dignified, equitable, and affordable housing for all. That is why we continue to

be engaged in the implementation of ULA. These past two years we have regularly met as the cohort for political education and skill based training. We are committed to our vision of seeing Social Housing built in our communities and a city where housing is a human right.

This motion undermines our grassroots campaign from the last five years and it undermines the will of the voters. ULA is working! ULA is providing the solution that this city needs – it is not the problem that needs fixing. ULA went into effect at the same time key macroeconomic factors were peaking, which had caused declines in development activity across LA County, California and the U.S. These factors included: **interest rates, insurance premiums, and cost of construction materials**. Then followed by additional factors: **tariffs and immigration raids and deportation** that have impacted the construction labor force.

Actual development metrics tell a story of confidence in the real estate market. **Real estate transactions** subject to the ULA tax are on a steady rise, quarter over quarter since the measure's inception. **Housing project applications and pre-applications surged** in 2025. In the first 6 months of LA's Citywide Housing Incentive Program (CHIP), over 16,000 units were applied for by developers. **Housing entitlements are up 52%** in the City from 2022-2024. **Residential building permits are increasing every quarter since early 2024.**¹

Los Angeles needs alternatives not drawbacks. The housing crisis cannot be solved through the same models that exacerbate the crises. **Traditional affordable housing alone is not enough** because affordability covenants expire, developments are financially engineered for investor returns, or exclude the lowest-income tenants. We also know that **interim housing is not a long-term solution**. While temporary shelter can play a role in crisis response, it does not provide permanence, stability or tenant rights. **The City already has a plan to cover the completion of the remaining beds/units required by the City's settlement with LA Alliance for Human Rights** (Alliance) with revenue from the state Homeless Housing, Assistance and Prevention (HHAP) Program, LACAHSR RPHP, and Measure A Local Solutions fund. Additionally, LAHSA released the first RFP to fund 450 units last week. Furthermore, **ULA funds are already supporting the City's requirements under the Alliance settlement** by funding the construction of permanent supportive housing (PSH) units, such as those at the Rousseau Residences, Montesquieu Manor, Voltaire Villas and Santa Monica & Vermont Apartments. Extremely Low Income (ELI) units may also be available to count toward the Alliance settlement requirements, if developers and owners are willing to lease them through CES or related homeless services systems, which is something the City could require. Additional PSH and ELI units that could count toward the Alliance settlement and hundreds more affordable housing units will soon be funded by ULA in the City's inaugural Homes for LA NOFA awards expected in the coming weeks.

We have seen neighbors use funds from Stay House LA to stay in homes. It brings us hope that our city has a tool that is completely by Angelenos and for Angelenos to keep neighbors housed and to build housing for our neighbors. Finally a response to the homeless crisis.

¹ https://www.oxy.edu/sites/default/files/Research-Flaws-Undermine-Bold-Claims-Sept-2025_4.pdf

Social housing offers a fundamentally different path. It treats housing as a right, as part of essential infrastructure- like schools, hospitals, or libraries- rather than a commodity. By creating permanently affordable housing outside the speculative market, social housing helps curb rising rents, prevents displacement, builds long-term community stability, offers community ownership models, and promotes multiracial democratic practices. Weakening ULA now- before its full implementation- threatens this transformative potential.

A council-backed amendment sends the wrong message. Supporting a ballot measure to amend ULA signals that the City is willing to weaken a community-driven, voter-approved response to one of the most urgent crises we face. It undermines public trust- at a time in our history where more and more people no longer trust government- and shifts the conversation away from implementation and toward rollback through city-backed exemptions for developers.

Instead of pursuing charity for developers that narrow ULA's scope, the Council should focus on:

1. Strong, timely implementation of ULA programs
2. Prioritize Alternative Models, and Acquisition and Rehabilitation social housing pipelines to prevent displacement now
3. Full staffing of LAHD to properly administer funds and fast-track implementation of programs that have been held up by bureaucratic red-tape.

We demand City Council to:

1. Oppose any motion to place a Council-backed amendment to Measure ULA on the ballot
2. Publicly affirm ULA as a critical tool for preventing homelessness and advancing social housing and community-controlled alternatives.
3. Execute or advance the contracts on four ULA programs in the next 30 days that have been pending at the City of LA for months, including the contracts for social housing capacity building; income assistance dollars to seniors and people with disabilities such as those affected by the 2025 fires and immigration actions; right to counsel; and for a fund administrator for the City's small Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing units program.
4. Starting with the upcoming spring 2026 Homes for LA NOFA, the City should allow social housing, nonprofit affordable housing developers to access up to 100% of total development costs for the Alternative Models for Permanent Affordable Housing program
5. The City should craft a time-bound plan that will award ULA funds to social housing development teams along with site control for City-owned land
6. Work in partnership with ULA advocates and the Citizens Oversight Committee to work on addressing technical challenges faced by nonprofit affordable housing development teams and Community Land Trusts, which could include updating various guidelines and evaluating any technical amendments needed to make ULA stronger in its impact.
7. Work in partnership with tenant leaders, social housing advocates, and community organizations to ensure ULA fulfills its transformative promise

Sincerely,

The ACT-LA Social Housing Leadership Cohort

Margarita CD2

Deshanae

Eunyoung CD13

Diana CD13

Alex

Gloria

Alejandra CD8

Esmeralda CD14

Irma CD14

Zebastian

Daniela CD14

Salvador CD9

Emma

Christus CD10

Rachel CD1

Carmina CD13

Antonio CD9

Kimberly

Camerina CD14

Eva CD13