

MOTION

Los Angeles is home to hundreds of thousands of small businesses that serve as vital economic and cultural anchors in neighborhoods across the City. Many of these businesses are immigrant-owned and provide essential jobs, goods, and services to local communities. However, small businesses continue to face economic pressures stemming from post-pandemic recovery challenges, inflation, and declining activity in certain commercial corridors.

Unlike residential tenants, commercial tenants currently have limited protections against harassment or coercive conduct by landlords. Reports from small businesses indicate that some commercial tenants experience practices such as unwarranted lease violations, interruption of essential services, failure to perform necessary repairs, threats of retaliation, and other bad-faith actions intended to force tenants to vacate their premises.

The City of Los Angeles previously adopted the Tenant Anti-Harassment Ordinance (LAMC Sections 45.33–45.35) to protect residential tenants from harassment and displacement tactics. Additionally, the County of Los Angeles has adopted protections for commercial tenants in unincorporated areas. Establishing similar protections for commercial tenants in the City of Los Angeles would help stabilize neighborhood-serving small businesses, prevent displacement, and support the City’s broader economic development goals.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the City Council INSTRUCT the Chief Legislative Analyst (CLA), with assistance from the Economic and Workforce Development Department (EWDD), the Department of City Planning, and other relevant departments, to report back within 90 days with an analysis of potential protections for commercial tenants in the City of Los Angeles, including the feasibility of establishing a Commercial Tenant Anti-Harassment Ordinance (TAHO) modeled in part on the City’s existing residential Tenant Anti-Harassment Ordinance (LAMC §§45.33–45.35) and similar protections adopted by the County of Los Angeles and other jurisdictions.

I FURTHER MOVE that the City Council REQUEST the City Attorney, with assistance from the CLA and EWDD, to participate in the analysis and report on the legal framework and authority for the City to adopt a Commercial Tenant Anti-Harassment Ordinance, including recommendations for a draft ordinance, if appropriate, consistent with applicable federal and California law.

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