

Communication from Public

Name: Jerard D. Wright

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Council File No: 25-0006-S16

Comments for Public Posting: Re: ITEM 2 – Rent Freeze and Eviction Moratorium – 25-0006-S16 (OPPOSE) To the Honorable Chair Nithya Raman and Housing & Homelessness Committee, We are writing on behalf of the Greater Los Angeles Realtors® (GLAR), a real estate trade organization representing a membership of nearly 12,000 REALTOR® members throughout the Los Angeles region, including the cities of Beverly Hills, Culver City, Los Angeles, Santa Monica and West Hollywood to express our concerns regarding the proposed amended Rent Freeze and Eviction Moratorium. The proposed freeze will negatively impact housing affordability and availability, further destabilize the rental housing market overall by adding a confusing and conflicting policy to what the State has already adopted in their emergency ordinance and could undermine the existing protections the City already passed from what we learned last week through the questions of Councilmember Traci Park during floor discussion. It is also worth noting that protections are already in place to protect those impacted by the wildfires. The proposed amended policy - except for part 7 - will further erode smaller housing providers, those mom-and-pop landlords who provide the bulk of the naturally affordable housing in the city by making renting property less predictable and more confusing to navigate. Los Angeles already has strong renter protections; the proposed moratorium simply goes too far and adds another unnecessary layer of regulations. MORE IN ATTACHED LETTER

February 4, 2025

LA City Councilmember Nithya Raman
Housing and Homelessness Committee Chair
Los Angeles City Hall
200 North Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012



**Re: ITEM 2 - Rent Freeze and Eviction Moratorium - 25-0006-S16
(OPPOSE)**

To the Honorable Chair Nithya Raman and Housing & Homelessness Committee,

We are writing on behalf of the Greater Los Angeles Realtors® (GLAR), a real estate trade organization representing a membership of nearly 12,000 REALTOR® members throughout the Los Angeles region, including the cities of Beverly Hills, Culver City, Los Angeles, Santa Monica and West Hollywood to express our concerns regarding the proposed amended Rent Freeze and Eviction Moratorium.

The proposed freeze will negatively impact housing affordability and availability, further destabilize the rental housing market overall by adding a confusing and conflicting policy to what the State has already adopted in their emergency ordinance and could undermine the existing protections the City already passed from what we learned last week through the questions of Councilmember Traci Park during floor discussion. It is also worth noting that protections are **already in place** to protect those impacted by the wildfires.

The proposed amended policy - except for part 7 - will further erode smaller housing providers, those mom-and-pop landlords who provide the bulk of the naturally affordable housing in the city by making renting property less predictable and more confusing to navigate. Los Angeles already has strong renter protections; the proposed moratorium simply goes too far and adds another unnecessary layer of regulations.

GLAR and other partners are currently collaborating with the Mayor's office with the "Homes for Vets" plan to link homeless veterans with housing providers with open units. The unintended consequence of this motion has already jeopardized partnerships that the Mayor's office has worked diligently to create to structure this unique program. We learned that newer housing providers are becoming reluctant to house veterans through the program because the language in the current version of the amended motion still contains language that suggests a blanket approach eviction moratorium and rent freeze.

Smaller housing providers, who often operate on tight margins, would be harmed as most are barely recovering from not being allowed an increase in rents for nearly four years during COVID. We have seen housing providers get out of business and sell to corporate landlords because of the burden of costs and liabilities created by blanket policies like these as we witnessed during COVID.

The timing of this action could not be at a more vulnerable time to housing providers as costs have increased over the last four years.

- Insurance premiums increased by 25 to 50% and expected to rise even more due to the natural disasters ([CLICK HERE](#) to read news article).
- Utility costs (which are owned by the City of LA) went up on average 15%.
- Trash fees (also owned and controlled by the City) saw up to a 25% increase.

The current proposed rent freeze policy prevents owners from passing through costs to tenants to keep properties maintained while the amended motion still does not contain any suggestion of property tax freezes, utility rate freezes or trash hauling fee suspensions.

We had one long standing member dip into their life savings and sell his other duplex that he would have passed down to his child for generational wealth to cover the cost of modernizing and repairing five units from problem tenants that they could not evict due to the overreaching of that moratorium. Out of retaliation, these problem tenants caused significant mildew and plumbing damage to the adjacent units because this style of motion prevented this member from legally evicting this problem tenant who would not pay rent, though they had the legitimate means to pay their rent.

GLAR wants to help people who are genuinely affected by recent natural disasters, but most of the proposed amended policies contain no guardrails that can lead to similar cases of fraud that will hurt housing providers and tenants who really need the help.

In addition, the methodology cited in the preamble to the original motion and recent research cited by the 'Rent Brigade' being used to show price gouging and other tactics are problematic. The over 1300 listings cited in the price gouging tracker, GLAR learned that more than two-thirds of these units are brand new listings, these are predominately single family homes, and the majority of these listings are located in luxury market locations in the Hollywood Hills, Century City, Brentwood, Venice Beach which generally listed for a higher price even before the start of the wildfires. **There were zero reports of price gouging in South and East LA.** These findings were verified in an oral presentation by the City Attorney's office and LA Housing Department to this very committee last week.

GLAR urges that the only work that should be done is to find financial assistance to help tenants and housing providers pay rent and mortgage, which is part 7 in the Hutt-Hernandez motion. A program with verification and means testing should be a way to

ensure that victims who lost work and or housing due to natural disasters will receive these resources. It should not be a blank check. There must be guard rails that will ensure that tenants and housing providers receive the support that they need. The city has already stepped up to protect renters impacted by the wildfires – it does not need to overreach with the remaining language in most of the proposed amended motion which would ultimately harm the city’s already strained rental housing stock.

GLAR will continue to advocate for increasing homeownership opportunities for all, increasing workforce housing production, protecting property rights, and supporting small businesses. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact our Government Affairs Director at (323) 919-9424 or jerard@glarealtors.com.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our concerns with this proposal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anne Russell". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Anne" and last name "Russell" clearly distinguishable.

Anne Russell
GLAR President 2025