

Communication from Public

Name: Children's Institute

Date Submitted: 05/21/2024 08:39 AM

Council File No: 18-0610-S3

Comments for Public Posting: On behalf of Children's Institute, I am writing to request your support for Council File (CF) 18-0610-S3 Right to Counsel / Low-Income Tenants / Eviction Defense Program, specifically the City Attorney's draft ordinance to codify the 'City Funded Counsel for Tenants Program' and establish a free legal defense against eviction resource for qualifying residents. The homelessness crisis in the City of Los Angeles demands a comprehensive approach which not only focuses on sheltering the unhoused, but also adopting protective measures that prevent more families from falling into homelessness.



May 21, 2024

The Honorable Members of the Los Angeles City Council
Los Angeles City Hall
200 N. Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

RE: Council File 18-0610-S3 Right to Counsel / Low-Income Tenants / Eviction Defense Program- SUPPORT

On behalf of Children's Institute, I am writing to request your support for Council File (CF) 18-0610-S3 Right to Counsel / Low-Income Tenants / Eviction Defense Program, specifically the City Attorney's draft ordinance to codify the 'City Funded Counsel for Tenants Program' and establish a free legal defense against eviction resource for qualifying residents. The homelessness crisis in the City of Los Angeles demands a comprehensive approach which not only focuses on sheltering the unhoused, but also adopting protective measures that prevent more families from falling into homelessness.

Children's Institute is one of the largest and oldest human service agencies, serving 30,000 Los Angeles County children and their families annually. We support children and families in achieving emotional well-being and educational success, which build pathways to economic mobility and lifelong health. Using a whole-family life course approach, our families discover strengths and develop skills that create enduring success at every stage of life. We do this through our network of early childhood education centers and community hubs that provide education, behavioral health services, care coordination, and employment supports.

Annually, approximately 30,000 eviction notices are filed within the City of Los Angeles, often leaving tenants without the means to contest unjust evictions. In these cases, many tenants forego their legal rights, leading to default judgments and potentially avoidable displacements. With COVID-19 related tenant protections expired, including the city's eviction moratorium and nonpayment protections, the number of city residents facing eviction has reached crisis levels, exacerbating the already detrimental effects of unstable housing on the well-being of children and families. Last year alone, about 80,000 eviction notices were filed, the highest of any other year since 2016. This surge in evictions disproportionately affected Black and Latino families, amplifying their vulnerability to housing insecurity and exacerbating existing disparities in access to stable housing. Understanding the critical role of safe housing as a social driver of health, this eviction surge underscores the urgent need for a city funded counsel program. As a children & family behavioral health organization we recognize the critical importance of supporting the well-being of families facing eviction, especially those disproportionately impacted by housing instability.

For these reasons, Children's Institute respectfully requests your support for CF 18-0610-S3. If you have any questions, please contact Terry Kim at tkim@childrensinstitute.org or 323-327-6187.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Terry Kim'.

Terry Kim
Director of Government Relations & Advocacy