

## Communication from Public

**Name:** Greg Spiegel

**Date Submitted:** 02/11/2021 09:45 AM

**Council File No:** 20-0102

**Comments for Public Posting:** Inner City Law Center welcomes a Right to Housing in Los Angeles as a long overdue and necessary strategy to finally tackle the greatest threat to the City – its crisis of displacement, eviction and lack of affordable housing. 500,000+ families in LA County earning less than \$55,000 per year cannot afford the home they currently live in. And the burden is not evenly distributed. Black families and Latinx families are more likely to be severely rent burdened and evicted than White families. And single mothers of color are the most likely to be evicted. A Right to Housing is needed because the market won't and never has addressed the housing needs of low-income people. Market developers do not seek to house low-income families – there is no profit in it. Beginning with a robust and comprehensive Right to Housing is the place to start. A Right to Housing is... A permanent home. It is not a cot in a shelter. A shelter can be preferable to the street, but it is not a home, certainly not a permanent one from which someone can build their life. A home that someone can afford, meaning you can pay rent and pay for the other necessities of life like food, medication, clothes, schooling, utilities, etc. You should be able to afford everything a family needs AND afford housing. An equity strategy that addresses the historic segregation and ongoing systemic racism that makes it more likely that you will be evicted if you are Black or Latinx or a single-mother of Color. A home that is stable. It's more than a physical housing unit. It's a having a home that is free from threats of harassment, intimidation and unjust eviction. It's a home that provides people with a stable life, rooted in their community. And if that stability is under threat, it provides access to resources to protect the home, including the Right to Counsel. And if displaced, the tenant does not have legal barriers that prevent her from getting another home. A home that is habitable. It is not a slum. A home that is in a safe and well-resourced neighborhood. A home that is available throughout the City, regardless of historic segregation and exclusionary zoning. Finally, a Right to Housing is a massive public funding for affordable housing development.

## Communication from Public

**Name:** Shannon Murray

**Date Submitted:** 02/11/2021 10:27 AM

**Council File No:** 20-0102

**Comments for Public Posting:** Good Morning Everyone. My name is Shannon Murray and I am representing the Watts Labor Community Action Committee as well as the SPA 6 Homeless Coalition, comprised of over 30 entities in the South Los Angeles area. I am writing today to support the establishment of a sustainable RIGHT TO HOUSING mandate and framework within the City of Los Angeles in order to provide housing to our houseless and rent burdened neighbors. We need to ensure that we have safe, affordable housing to ALL ANGELENOS. As a Homeless Services Provider for over 25 years and representing , I have seen that healthy, safe, affordable housing is the most healthy and therapeutic thing that you can do for a person/household experiencing homelessness, in addition to being humane, ethical and cost -effective. It is life changing and all things come from stability and meeting the most basic needs, as has been established within the Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. As a "first world nation" and one of the best cities in the country, we are very behind the times--the Right to Housing has been part of the following International Human Right Organizations for years: Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights recognizes the right to housing as part of the right to an adequate standard of living.[1] It states that: Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control. Article 11(1) of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) also guarantees the right to housing as part of the right to an adequate standard of living.[1] In international human rights law the right to housing is regarded as a freestanding right. This was clarified in the 1991 General Comment no 4 on Adequate Housing by the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.[2] The general comment provides an authoritative interpretation of the right to housing in legal terms under international law.[1] Thank you for your work on this very important matter. We have faith that you will do the right thing and push the Right to Housing Motion forward so that we can all work together to make Los Angeles the best city it can be, through the elimination of

homelessness, slum housing, rent burdened household and by providing all Angelenos an affordable home. Respectfully,  
Shannon Murray, LCSW Director, Homeless and Housing Services, WLCAC Chairwoman, SPA 6 Homeless Coalition

## Communication from Public

**Name:** Jaime Garcia

**Date Submitted:** 02/11/2021 10:50 AM

**Council File No:** 20-0102

**Comments for Public Posting:** The Hospital Association of Southern CA which represents 38 hospitals within the City appreciates this opportunity to voice support for this motion that directs the City Administrative Officer and Chief Legislative Analyst to review the Comprehensive Crisis Response Strategy issued by the Governor's Council of Regional Homeless Advisors. Approval of this motion helps initiate a process of defining and laying a foundation for how the city can implement the goals outlined in the report. It presents an opportunity to examine how local dollars are being spent, and how realignment of funds, in some areas, might better serve residents of this city for purposes of maximizing State funds that target homelessness. That said, the hospital community supports the Right to Housing framework. It offers a pathway for how the city will tackle homelessness; and, if done right, may offer an efficient and timely pathway to access housing placement for individuals experiencing homelessness. This plan offers renewed hope for restoring human dignity to individuals and families that need a roof over their heads. Thank you for your time and stay safe.

## Communication from Public

**Name:** Yuval Yossefy  
**Date Submitted:** 02/11/2021 10:56 AM  
**Council File No:** 20-0102  
**Comments for Public Posting:** Please see file included below, on behalf of the Legal Aid Foundation of LA.



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Los Angeles, CA 90017  
323-801-7991 Phone  
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Los Angeles City Council  
200 N Spring Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

February 11, 2021  
RE: Council File #20-0102

To the Los Angeles City Council,

I am writing on behalf of the Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles (LAFLA) to comment on Councilmember Ridley-Thomas' motion (#20-0102), which aims to set up a legal framework and implementation plan to achieve a Right to Housing and "redress the structural disparities that disproportionately affect Black people and other historically-oppressed peoples." We see this as an important step in the right direction, but it must include a Right to Eviction Counsel to be truly impactful to LA City residents' quality of life.

LAFLA has worked to provide clients with access to fundamental legal services for over 90 years. Over 2.1 million people are low-income in Los Angeles and many of these individuals are in urgent need of civil legal aid. LAFLA is the first place to which more than 100,000 low-income people turn to each year when they need legal assistance for a crisis that threatens their livelihood. One of LAFLA's highest priorities in Los Angeles is increasing and preserving affordable, quality housing and helping low-income people to keep their homes by fighting illegal harassment by landlords, challenging unfair termination from housing programs, and preventing evictions and homelessness. In 2019, LAFLA assisted nearly 8,000 clients with these housing matters.

As lead contractor of the Stay Housed LA eviction prevention and defense program, and as a member of the Right to Counsel Coalition, we strongly believe that the City of Los Angeles must affirm its commitment to develop and establish a Right to Housing framework that systematically dismantles decades of structural inequities directly affecting our Black and Brown communities. However, we cannot have a Right to Housing if at the point of losing housing, we don't have a Right to Counsel. We urge the City to codify the Right to Counsel as it seeks to implement its Right to Housing Framework.

Due to our vast experience in this arena, we know that evictions disproportionately target low-income families of color. During 2015-2020, LAFLA served 37,019 households facing eviction and other housing-related legal issues. 71% of these clients were Black, Hispanic or Latinx. Furthermore, 92% of the state funded Shriver Eviction Defense Program clients spent more than a third of their monthly household income on rent, indicating significant housing cost burdens. Ultimately, this system fuels Los Angeles' homelessness and housing crises, made even more devastating by the COVID-19 pandemic.

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**Other Office Locations:**

**East Los Angeles Office**, 5228 Whittier Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90022; 213-640-3883  
**Long Beach Office**, 601 Pacific Ave., Long Beach, CA 90802; 562-435-3501  
**Santa Monica Office**, 1640 5th St., Suite 124, Santa Monica, CA 90401; 310-899-6200  
**South Los Angeles Office**, 7000 S. Broadway, Los Angeles, CA 90003; 213-640-3950

We also know that evictions result from unequal power. Nationally, 90% of tenants facing eviction do not have representation from an attorney, while 90% of landlords do, creating a dynamic in which tenants almost always lose even if they have a valid legal defense. Balancing this power dynamic has deeply meaningful effects; a 2017 evaluation of eviction representation demonstrated that having an attorney in an eviction case increases a family's chance of avoiding homelessness by over 70%. Right to Counsel not only stops the eviction crisis and keeps families out of homelessness -- it also prevents the mass displacement of low-income people of color from their homes and neighborhoods. Stabilizing family housing keeps children on track at school, helps curb the spread of the coronavirus, and preserves community affordability in the long-run.

We commend the City Council, and specifically the Homelessness & Poverty Committee, for raising this issue and taking this important first step. This committee now has the opportunity to implement meaningful prevention mechanisms (including a Codified Right to Counsel, Tenant Anti-Harassment, and stronger tenant protections) in its Right to Housing Framework, focusing funds away from temporary solutions that drain resources from permanent housing, and towards structural solutions that begin the paradigm shift in addressing homelessness at large.

We appreciate the continued partnership and look forward to collaborating on eviction prevention and defense in Los Angeles.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Yuval Yossefy". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Yuval Yossefy  
Special Projects Manager, Right to Counsel  
Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles

## Communication from Public

**Name:** Deon Turner

**Date Submitted:** 02/11/2021 10:56 AM

**Council File No:** 20-0102

**Comments for Public Posting:** The City of Los Angeles must affirm its commitment to develop and establish a Right to Housing framework that systematically dismantles decades of structural inequities directly affecting our Black and Brown communities. However, we cannot have a right to housing if at the point of losing housing, we don't have a Right to Counsel. We urge the City to codify the Right to Counsel as it seeks to implement its Right to Housing Framework. Make no mistake, a Codified Right to Counsel is a racial justice issue as evictions target people of color and low-income families. • Low-income tenants, women of color, and families with children comprise a majority of tenants facing eviction. • It is a well-documented fact that evictions disproportionately impact Black and female-headed households. Decades of analysis demonstrate that the higher the percentage of Black persons and children living in female headed households, the higher the eviction rate. • Right to Counsel not only stops the eviction crisis, it will prevent the mass displacement of low-income people of color from their homes and neighborhoods. • In California, 92% of Shriver clients spent more than 30% of their monthly household income on rent, and 73% spent 50% or more. • The majority of Shriver clients within the Los Angeles cases (57%) were female, 45% were Latinx, and 30% were African American. Embedding the Codified Right to Counsel as a component of Right to Housing begins the paradigm shift in addressing homelessness at large. • The Homelessness & Poverty Committee has an opportunity to implement prevention mechanisms (such as RTC, Tenant Anti-Harassment, and Eviction Defenses) in its framework • Tunnel visioning in temporary solutions, such as shelters, drains resources from permanent housing and other resources without providing long-term solutions. When developing a Right to Housing Framework, we need to address Preservation & Protection, Street Homelessness, and Production & Creation of Affordable Housing We thank you, Chairman Ridley-Thomas for sparking the overdue discussion on how we can assist our unhoused neighbors and provide a Right to Housing.



To: Los Angeles City Council – Homelessness & Poverty Committee  
From: Deon Turner, Public Policy Advocate – Inner City Law Center  
Date: February 11, 2021  
Subject: Right to Housing (CF 20-0102) Support

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The City of Los Angeles must affirm its commitment to develop and establish a Right to Housing framework that systematically dismantles decades of structural inequities directly affecting our Black and Brown communities. However, we cannot have a right to housing if at the point of losing housing, we don't have a Right to Counsel. We urge the City to codify the Right to Counsel as it seeks to implement its Right to Housing Framework.

Make no mistake, a Codified Right to Counsel is a racial justice issue as evictions target people of color and low-income families.

- And the burden is not evenly distributed. Black families and Latinx families are more likely to be severely rent burdened and evicted than White families. And single mothers of color are the most likely to be evicted.
- Low-income tenants, women of color, and families with children comprise a majority of tenants facing eviction.
- It is a well-documented fact that evictions disproportionately impact Black and female-headed households. Decades of analysis demonstrate that the higher the percentage of Black persons and children living in female headed households, the higher the eviction rate.
- Right to Counsel not only stops the eviction crisis, it will prevent the mass displacement of low-income people of color from their homes and neighborhoods.
- In California, 92% of Shriver clients spent more than 30% of their monthly household income on rent, and 73% spent 50% or more.
- The majority of Shriver clients within the Los Angeles cases (57%) were female, 45% were Latinx, and 30% were African American.

Embedding the Codified Right to Counsel as a component of Right to Housing begins the paradigm shift in addressing homelessness at large.

- The Homelessness & Poverty Committee has an opportunity to implement prevention mechanisms (such as RTC, Tenant Anti-Harassment, and Eviction Defenses) in its framework.
- Tunnel visioning in temporary solutions, such as shelters, drains resources from permanent housing and other resources without providing long-term solutions. When developing a Right to Housing Framework, we need to address Preservation & Protection, Street Homelessness, and Production & Creation of Affordable Housing

We thank you, Chairman Ridley-Thomas for sparking the overdue discussion on how we can assist our unhoused neighbors and provide a Right to Housing.

## Communication from Public

**Name:** Sonia Suresh

**Date Submitted:** 02/11/2021 11:05 AM

**Council File No:** 20-0102

**Comments for Public Posting:** My name is Sonia Suresh, I am with Strategic Actions for a Just Economy (SAJE). SAJE works for community-serving economic development, tenant rights and access to healthy and affordable housing for all. I am providing public comment on item 1 (council file 20-0102) SAJE is in support of establishing a right to housing framework which will address many of the systemic issues that have led to our current housing crisis. As part of SAJE's housing decommodification work we are working towards establishing housing as a human right, not as a means for profit. City established RTH framework will provide us with the institutional support needed to enact this decommodification work successfully.



My name is Sonia Suresh, I am with Strategic Actions for a Just Economy (SAJE). SAJE works for community-serving economic development, tenant rights and access to healthy and affordable housing for all. I am providing public comment on items 1 (council file 20-0102), 7 (council file 21-0063) and 8 (council file 20-1552).

On Item 1, SAJE is in support of establishing a right to housing framework which will address many of the systemic issues that have led to our current housing crisis. As part of SAJE's housing decommodification work we are working towards establishing housing as a human right, not as a means for profit. City established RTH framework will provide us with the institutional support needed to enact this decommodification work successfully.

On Item 7, SAJE is in support. We know available land is a large factor in what has led to lack of affordable housing as well as the rising numbers of evictions and homelessness. We believe that public land should be used for public good and that land already in the hands of the government should be low hanging fruit for addressing the lack of affordable housing. We appreciate the new urgency and different criteria being used to look at the land available. We are urging the council to act on the report in a timely manner. We are also advocating for the identified land to continue to be held by the government and to be considered for CLTs or social housing later once long term plans are established for these sites.

On Item 8, again we are in support for the use of public land for affordable housing. We also would like to uplift our partners at the El Sereno Community Land Trust call for the land to be transferred to them. CLTS are a more equitable and sustainable option and the land should be in the hands of the community who have been organizing for this.

Thank you.

## Communication from Public

**Name:** Simboa Wright, SEIU 721

**Date Submitted:** 02/11/2021 11:38 AM

**Council File No:** 20-0102

**Comments for Public Posting:** SIMBOA WRIGHT LA CITY HOMELESSNESS AND POVERTY COMMITTEE MEETING, "RIGHT TO HOUSING" MOTION Thursday, February 11, 2021 Good morning, members of the Los Angeles City Council. My name is Simboa Wright. I work as a Wastewater Collection Worker II for the Department of Public Works. I'm also an Executive Board Member at SEIU Local 721. We support the motion before you authored by Councilman Mark Ridley-Thomas. Our union agrees: "Homelessness continues to be the moral crisis of our time." Many of our union members work directly with the homeless. We know first-hand how critical this situation is across our city. And we've seen how the global coronavirus pandemic has only worsened this ongoing crisis. That's why we support creating a "Right to Housing." It's time to take bold, strategic steps to address homelessness in Los Angeles. Because all Angelenos deserve to have a place to call home. A "Right to Housing" is an important step forward. Our union is pleased to support it. Thank you.