

Communication from Public

Name:

Date Submitted: 08/01/2023 02:03 PM

Council File No: 23-0038

Comments for Public Posting: Dear Housing and Homelessness Committee, Please re-assign these millions of dollars, assigned in your proposal and designate at least 90% of ULA funds, to keeping tenants housed and paying their back rent, which is legally owed to their housing providers. Disproportionately, assigning \$39.7 Million to Legal Defense + Education, is immoral. Why not keep tenants housed, by paying back rent? Isn't this the whole purpose, to keep people housed? In this budget you only have \$18.4 million assigned to short-term rent relief. THIS MAKES NO SENSE! Moreover, how is this moral? By paying back rent, you are avoiding evictions, costly legal fees to both housing providers and tenants (your multi-million tax payer supported legal defense). And you are also saving a great deal of emotional time and trauma to tenants and housing providers this way. People would rather not have to go through any kind of eviction process and that's why it makes sense to re-assign this tax payer ULA funds, for paying people's rent. Do the right thing here and don't waste tax payer money in this way. Help people instead. Thank you.

Communication from Public

Name: Rosie Brown

Date Submitted: 08/01/2023 09:42 AM

Council File No: 23-0038

Comments for Public Posting: August 1, 2023 Councilmember Nithya Raman, Chair Housing and Homelessness Committee Los Angeles City Council 200 North Spring Street Los Angeles, CA 90012 Via City Clerk Public Comment Form Re: ULA Program Guidelines - Council File: 23-0038 Strengthening Wage Standards in Eviction Defense Programs Dear Chair Raman and Members of the Housing and Homelessness Committee: The undersigned are labor unions that represent many of the attorneys, paralegals, secretaries, case managers, and other staff who are responsible for the tireless work of ensuring that Stay Housed LA is a success. Eviction defense work is particularly demanding work for both attorneys and para-professionals. It often involves complex, fast-paced litigation on behalf of vulnerable clients at risk of homelessness. It can require numerous in-person court appearances per week, requiring attorneys and support staff to constantly prepare for appearances and take time to go to court. We are asking the City Council to adopt wage standards for the Measure ULA Eviction Defense/Prevention Program and for any other ULA programs where the City will subcontract with nonprofit organizations for legal work. The City of Los Angeles should guarantee that all workers providing critical eviction defense services are paid an adequate and fair wage. Specifically, to be eligible to receive funding under the ULA Eviction Defense and Prevention Program, the United to House LA Interim Program Guidelines should require that employers pay legal services workers wages comparable to staff of the City Attorney's Office performing similar roles. This requirement should be incorporated into the Stay Housed LA Program as soon as is feasible. Because of the comparatively low salaries and demanding nature of the work, existing eviction defense programs are constantly understaffed and struggle to fill open positions. Law school graduates interested in public interest work can readily find higher salaries with entry-level government attorney positions, including with the City of Los Angeles. Staffing challenges mean that eviction defense programs cannot respond to the demand in the community. Programs frequently need to close intake lines or turn down cases. We will not have a true "right to counsel" until pay is increased so there is adequate staffing to deliver on the promise to tenants that if they are facing eviction, there will be an attorney

available to represent them in court. We shouldn't create incentives for the City to contract out services it deems essential and important at a significantly lower rate than what it pays its own staff. Seventy percent of the funding in measure ULA already includes labor standards. The United to House LA Interim Program Guidelines should extend labor standards to eviction defense programs as well. Sincerely, Mallory Andrews, Acting President Union of Legal Services Workers of Los Angeles a Unit of the National Organization of Legal Services Workers (UAW Local 2320) (representing bargaining unit employees of the Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles) Rosie Brown, President The Union at Public Counsel (PCU) AFSCME Local 609 (representing bargaining unit employees of Public Counsel)

August 1, 2023

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

Via City Clerk Public Comment Form

**Re: ULA Program Guidelines - Council File: 23-0038
Strengthening Wage Standards in Eviction Defense Programs**

Dear Chair Raman and Members of the Housing and Homelessness Committee:

The undersigned are labor unions that represent many of the attorneys, paralegals, secretaries, case managers, and other staff who are responsible for the tireless work of ensuring that Stay Housed LA is a success. Eviction defense work is particularly demanding work for both attorneys and para-professionals. It often involves complex, fast-paced litigation on behalf of vulnerable clients at risk of homelessness. It can require numerous in-person court appearances per week, requiring attorneys and support staff to constantly prepare for appearances and take time to go to court.

We are asking the City Council to adopt wage standards for the Measure ULA Eviction Defense/Prevention Program and for any other ULA programs where the City will subcontract with nonprofit organizations for legal work. The City of Los Angeles should guarantee that all workers providing critical eviction defense services are paid an adequate and fair wage. Specifically, to be eligible to receive funding under the ULA Eviction Defense and Prevention Program, the United to House LA Interim Program Guidelines should require that employers pay legal services workers wages comparable to staff of the City Attorney's Office performing similar roles. This requirement should be incorporated into the Stay Housed LA Program as soon as is feasible.

Because of the comparatively low salaries and demanding nature of the work, existing eviction defense programs are constantly understaffed and struggle to fill open positions. Law school graduates interested in public interest work can readily find higher salaries with entry-level government attorney positions, including with the City of Los Angeles. Staffing challenges mean that eviction defense programs cannot respond to the demand in the community. Programs frequently need to close intake lines or turn down cases. We will not have a true "right to counsel" until pay is increased so there is adequate staffing to deliver on the promise to tenants that if they are facing eviction, there will be an attorney available to represent them in court.

We shouldn't create incentives for the City to contract out services it deems essential and important at a significantly lower rate than what it pays its own staff. Seventy percent of the funding in measure ULA already includes labor standards. The United to House LA Interim Program Guidelines should extend labor standards to eviction defense programs as well.¹

Sincerely,

Mallory Andrews, Acting President

Union of Legal Services Workers of Los Angeles

a Unit of the National Organization of Legal Services
Workers (UAW Local 2320)

(representing bargaining unit employees of the Legal
Aid Foundation of Los Angeles)

Rosie Brown, President

The Union at Public Counsel (PCU)

AFSCME Local 609

(representing bargaining unit
employees of Public Counsel)

¹ Los Angeles Municipal Code [Section 22.618.7](#) requires construction or rehabilitation projects receiving funding from Measure ULA to pay prevailing wages and abide by other requirements.