

July 19, 2018

Dear Mayor Robert Garcia, Vice Mayor Rex Richardson, and the Long Beach City Council,

As you are aware, our city, like many across Los Angeles County, is in the midst of a housing crisis of epic proportions. With the rising cost of living and soaring housing prices many of our neighbors are threatened with the reality of displacement and homelessness. This population is dominated by our most vulnerable: families with children, veterans, the disabled and seniors. We have an undeniable demand for affordable housing and programs that can prevent homelessness. Our situation is not unique. In fact, nearly half of U.S. renters are considered “cost burdened,” spending 30 percent or more of their income on rent. In the Los Angeles-Long Beach-Anaheim metro area, a staggering 58% are cost overburdened, (US Census, 2017).

We have much work to do. With 18.8% of our residents living in poverty and a median household income of \$55,151, too many are struggling to stay afloat. In January 2018, our city had 1,863 homeless individuals but we know 3,000-4,000 fall in and out of homelessness each year.

Various city initiatives including the 2017 Housing Study Group, the Everyone In economic inclusion initiative, and the current Everyone Home Long Beach initiative, share the same goal- to help more residents have the opportunity for self sufficiency and access to quality, affordable housing.

Now is the time for the City of Long Beach to prioritize safe, affordable and quality housing for *every* Long Beach resident. We’re asking the city to create a dedicated local funding source to address affordability and solve the problem of homelessness.

We can’t keep relying on other agencies to address all of the city’s priorities. Dedicated local funding, not seen since the demise of redevelopment agencies, will help accelerate the construction of affordable housing units and reduce the number of residents living on the streets.

Thank you for your leadership in pursuit of creating a more equitable and vibrant Long Beach. We appreciate our continued partnership as we push for a local economy that includes and benefits every Long Beach resident.

We urge you to help our city continue to make progress on this important issue. We ask you to make housing for every Long Beach resident a priority.

Sincerely,



Ron Miller, Executive Secretary, Los Angeles/Orange County Building and Construction Trades Council



Jessica Quintana, Executive Director, El Centro Community Hispanic Association



Pastor Gregory Sanders
Long Beach Ministers’ Alliance



Stephen L. Gerhardt, AICP, Executive Director, Walk Long Beach