

#27

31 May 2004

72

Dear Long Beach City Council,

I am unable to attend today's meeting (June 1), but I want to tell you my shocking experience of searching for an apartment in Long Beach that I could afford. I was forced to stay in a room kind friends rented to me for a discount of \$350.- per month. I lived there TEN months while waiting to be re-hired by Long Beach Unified School District as an hourly teacher.

My income was \$660 (social security) and \$270.- from part-time work that paid more than minimum wage. After subtracting my room payment I had \$145.- a week to live on. I found out that renting even a studio apartment here in Long Beach was an impossible dream. I made call after call and the requirements were usually the same: first and last month deposit required, plus rent of \$675.- and higher. How could I ever afford an apartment in Long Beach?

I have only myself to worry about. My heart goes out to the multitude of families and single parents who are in desperate situations with no hope of a safe place to live, until affordable rental housing is made available in Long Beach to people who earn \$6.75 an hour or who are un-employed. What is our future here in Long Beach?

Please think about us when you formulate and vote on the Housing Action Plan. I trust that the plan will adequately address the current housing crisis in Long Beach.

Sincerely,
Barbara Updike