

From: Grecia Lopez-Reyes [mailto:greyes@laane.org]
Sent: Sunday, March 6, 2022 2:17 PM
To: CityClerk <CityClerk@longbeach.gov>
Subject: Fwd: Short-term Rentals and urgent Affordable Housing Needs -- 3.8.2022 City Council Agenda Item 13

-EXTERNAL-

March 7, 2022

Dear Mayor and City Council Members,

RE: Reject Coastal Commission Modifications to Long Beach Ordinance No. ORD-20-0024 on Short-Term Rentals

LiBRE, Long Beach Residents Empowered, respectfully urges the Long Beach City Council to reject the Coastal Commission's modification to Ordinance No. ORD-20-0024 regulating short-term rentals. The California Coastal Commission proposed changes to Long Beach's short-term rental (STR) Ordinance that would allow the conversion of more homes and apartments into party houses and unregulated hotels. The Commission's changes undermine the City's ordinance that was designed to protect housing by imposing a cap on the total number of STRs allowed.

Long Beach -- all of California -- is facing a housing crisis as rents skyrocket and the lack of affordable units drive current residents out of cities and the state. Long Beach has been particularly hard hit now that it is one of the 5 most unaffordable cities for homeowners in the United States beating out San Francisco for the number 5 spot. The lack of housing drives up the prices and rents, and short-term rentals worsen the housing crisis.

Our City Housing Element and track record for providing the minimum of needed affordable rental housing has recently prompted the state to notify us that we are delinquent in the number of affordable rental units. Our own City Reconciliation and Equity work has noted the desperate and unfulfilled need for affordable rental housing. It is our BIPOC and immigrant neighborhoods that currently suffer from outrageous rent increases, overcrowding (which makes the COVID health impacts worse) and other economic hardships because of the lack of affordable rental units.

In addition, short-term rentals have not proved that they increase coastal access nor that they are necessarily lower-cost accommodation in the Coastal Zone. Short-term rentals just create more luxury options for the richest travelers. In fact, STRs are often marketed as luxury hotel rooms and have room rates comparable to high-end hotels, especially when fees are included.

Long Beach is increasingly unaffordable for residents and for visitors who want to enjoy the coastline. Long Beach's future must be committed to equity, not gentrification.

LiBRE urges each of you to be the City Council leaders who will protect housing and preserve visitor accommodations by rejecting the Coastal Commission's modification to the cap on STRS and by adopting an additional provision to limit STRs to the primary residence of hosts, as has been done in the City of Los Angeles.

Leanna Noble
LiBRE Program Director

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Grecia Lopez-Reyes
Director, Long Beach Coalition
Los Angeles Alliance for a New Economy
E greyes@laane.org
T 213.977.9400 x106
M 424.221.3809

[464 Lucas Ave. Suite 202](http://www.laane.org)
[Los Angeles, CA 90017](http://www.laane.org)
www.laane.org