

Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
City of Long Beach
333 W. Ocean Boulevard, 14th Floor
Long Beach, CA 90802

Re: Recommendation to support City Council effort to explore the feasibility of standard rental application process/credit check to help alleviate cost burden for low income apartment rental applicants

Dear Mayor and Council Members:

In recent months the Long Beach Press Telegram has reported on various aspects related to the state of housing in Long Beach. The housing issues identified include significant increases in the cost of rentⁱ, an exceptionally low vacancy rateⁱⁱ, homelessness and a shortage of subsidized units ⁱⁱⁱ(e.g., Section 8).

The housing crisis in Long Beach seems to be reflective of a national trend that is complex and multifaceted. Over the last several months, the Human Relations Commission has heard from community leaders about issues related to housing and homelessness, and potential municipal policies and actions that may help to mitigate the issue.

The Human Relations Commission largely bases its perspective on this issue under the principals of equity, human rights^{iv}, and dignity. Additionally, our commission is particularly concerned about the disproportionate impact of housing and homelessness among vulnerable and/or disenfranchised communities including low income people, individuals affected by intimate partner violence, and people of color^v.

The Human Relations Commission works to develop and recommend programs and plans to the City Council designed to promote full acceptance of all citizens in the community in all aspects of community life and submits recommendations concerning matters relating to prejudice or discrimination in equal opportunity in employment, public accommodations, housing and education because of race, religion, national origin, age, gender, sexual orientation, or mental or physical disability.

It is in this light, that the Human Relations Commission strongly supports City Council's effort to explore the feasibility of housing programs and policies such as a standard rental application and credit check process that help to mitigate barriers for individuals seeking to secure and maintain stable housing.

ⁱ <http://www.presstelegram.com/lifestyle/20170325/rents-rise-anew-in-long-beach-which-cracks-top-10-list-of-cities-with-steepest-hikes>

ⁱⁱ <http://www.presstelegram.com/social-affairs/20170331/despite-section-8-affordable-housings-doors-still-slamming-shut>

ⁱⁱⁱ <http://www.presstelegram.com/social-affairs/20170405/fewer-landlords-accept-section-8-vouchers-long-beach-wants-to-change-that>

^{iv} http://www.who.int/hhr/Economic_social_cultural.pdf

^v <https://documents.lahsa.org/Planning/homelesscount/2016/factsheet/2016-HC-Results.pdf>

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