

April 2, 2019

Updated Signatories -- RE: Support for Tenant Relocation Assistance Policy to Prevent Homelessness

Dear Honorable Mayor and City Council:

As members of the Everyone Home Long Beach Task Force, which has developed concrete recommendations to address homelessness and housing, we thank you for your leadership in bringing forth a policy proposal that is critical to preventing homelessness: Tenant Relocation Assistance.

In the Everyone Home Task Force final report released in December 2018, Tenant Relocation Assistance is the first recommendation under Goal 3 of reducing homelessness. While increasing the funding for and availability of affordable housing are necessary components of ending homelessness, they alone are not enough if our low-income and vulnerable neighbors are not able to access and keep stable housing. Nearly 60 percent of Long Beach residents are renters. Without safeguards like Tenant Relocation Assistance, hundreds of thousands of families and individuals—especially those facing any kind of financial hardship—are at risk of homelessness. **Tenant protections will help keep people in homes, increase housing stability citywide, and prevent homelessness.**

In reviewing the staff recommendations to the City Council, we want to emphasize a few important provisions to ensure a strong policy:

- **Component 1: We strongly support both triggers for relocation assistance, and specifically, the trigger of a 10 percent total rent increase in any 12-month period.** As we stated in the Everyone Home Task Force report: “The City of Long Beach has been experiencing significant rent increases and increased displacement due to these rent increases, building sales and new ownership.” A 10 percent total rent increase over the course of a year would be unaffordable to most folks—especially the populations we work with—and would force them to move out. Therefore, a 10 percent total rent increase is an extremely reasonable trigger for relocation assistance.
- **Under Applicability Requirement Options, Option 1 is the best option for preventing homelessness.** Option 1’s relocation assistance amounts, totaling \$5,500 and \$7,500, are closer than any other option to making a family whole when considering the enormous financial burden caused by moving (moving costs, security deposit, first and last month’s rent, storage, time off work, child care). Option 1 also applies most broadly, providing the largest safeguard against residents falling into homelessness.
 - We are deeply concerned that Options 2 and 3 will not adequately prevent homelessness because the amounts proposed are a fraction of what is needed to cover costs. In addition, we have equity concerns in

terms of which units are covered (tenants live in all types of buildings, small and large) and the zip code requirements of Option 2, which would create an unfair advantage to those who live in higher-priced neighborhoods of the city.

- Finally, the City must take a proactive role in monitoring and enforcing this policy to ensure that good tenants who are being forced to move actually receive their relocation assistance under the law.

Once again, we thank you for your leadership in bringing this policy forward. We look forward to supporting a strong Tenant Relocation Assistance ordinance as a key strategy to prevent homelessness in Long Beach.

Sincerely,

Jane Close Conoley, California State University, Long Beach
Andy Kerr, Measure H Citizens' Oversight Advisory Board
Brenda Threatt, United States Veterans Initiative
Carolyn Caldwell, Dignity Health, St. Mary Medical Center
Chris Wing, SCAN Health Plan
Christina Miller, Mental Health America of Los Angeles
Christine Petit, Long Beach Forward
Gregory Sanders, Long Beach Minister's Alliance
Jessica Quintana, Centro CHA
Kathryn Miles, Jewish Family & Children's Service
Mary Ellen Mitchell, WomenShelter of Long Beach
Reagan Romali, Long Beach City College
Susana Sngiem, United Cambodian Community
Tonya Burns, Children Today