



Legislation Text

File #: 20-0348, **Version:** 1

Recommendation to request City Manager to report back to the City Council on how Long Beach households will be able to utilize the L.A. County Countywide Emergency Rental Assistance Program when it is implemented, and assess the feasibility of utilizing additional federal, state and private funding sources to leverage for additional Long Beach families in financial need to be able to obtain emergency rental assistance during the COVID-19 crisis.

The COVID-19 crisis is having a devastating economic impact on many residents in Long Beach. The City Council has adopted several measures previously to address many of the financial burdens caused by this crisis, including a tenant eviction moratorium that prohibits tenants from being evicted if they are unable to pay rent due to the COVID-19 crisis, and a suspension of utility shutoffs. However, renters will still need to pay back rent they owe after the crisis is over, creating an additional economic burden for Long Beach households.

According to the National Multifamily Housing Council, nearly one third of tenants nationwide were unable to pay this month's rent by April 5th, because of the financial impacts from the crisis. Nearly 60% of Long Beach households are renters. As a result, many property owners have also lost significant rental income that is needed to pay their mortgages, make necessary building repairs and support their families, as well. The City Council has adopted additional measures to help with these impacts, including suspending some fees that property owners pay to the City, and working to connect property owners with state and federal foreclosure protection programs.

On April 14, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors unanimously approved a motion by Supervisors Janice Hahn and Hilda Solis to implement a Countywide Emergency Rental Assistance Program. The program would provide up to \$1,000 per month for three months for renters who have lost income due to the coronavirus pandemic. Rental assistance through the program would not need to be paid back and could prevent families from falling into even worse economic hardship.

An implementation plan is expected to come back to the Board of Supervisors within 30 days, which would include how much funding is available for the program and how many families could be helped by the program. Money for the program would come from funding the County expects to receive from the Federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act (CARES Act). Additional funding could come from philanthropy and private sources.

Long Beach is also expecting to receive funding from the CARES Act, including additional Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) dollars that can be used to assist tenants with rent payments. Additionally, the Long Beach Coronavirus Disaster Relief Fund has already

received more than \$1 million in private donations that are being awarded in grants to local non-profit organizations to support Long Beach residents in need with critical expenses and other services.

Given the large scale of this public health and economic crisis, and its impact on a large percentage of Long Beach families with potentially long-term financial burdens, it is important that we identify ways that as many Long Beach families in need as possible will be able to utilize this emergency rental assistance program.

Statement of Urgency

Due to the current state of emergency, we ask that this item be considered at the April 21, 2020 Council meeting.

No Financial Management review was able to be conducted due to the urgency and time sensitivity of this item.

Approve recommendation.

AL AUSTIN
COUNCILMAN, EIGHT DISTRICT

MARY ZENDEJAS
COUNCILWOMAN, FIRST DISTRICT

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