

Katherine Douglas

Public Comment

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From: Natasha Durel <natashadurel@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, June 27, 2023 8:56 AM
To: Santa Barbara Tenants Union; Nelson, Bob; Williams, Das; Hartmann, Joan; Laura Capps; sbcob; Lavagnino, Steve
Cc: Andrea Bifano; Celia Lennon; Denny Wei; Raymond Rengo
Subject: Public Comment from Natasha Durel

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My name is Natasha Durel and I have reached out and made a comment on behalf of myself speaking from personal experience and as a member of the Santa Barbara Tenants Union. Beyond my personal experience with a bad practicing landlord, I continue to see so many more landlords playing out.

We must put the protective orders in place that will hold landlords more accountable and there is so much we can do in this area. One really important thing to note is that the Board can legally include a statement on Costa Hawkins in their proposal. With what we are seeing ply out, we need a far more compelling legal argument than Costa Hawkins, and believe the city is highly capable of raising the bar and expectations of integrity and morality in the renting world.

Some other ideas that we would like to see the council consider is a right to refusal policy, and instilled protections that apply to all steps of the eviction process.

A right of first refusal policy would mean that when a landlord renovates tenants they have to offer the unit back to the tenant, however they way it's currently written, the landlord would be allowed to increase the rent to however much they would like – this would be a significant loophole in the effectiveness of this law. To give you an example of this my landlord did a highly invasive construction project for over a year, refused to relocate me and lied that he wasn't going to raise the rent. He then tried to raise the rent from 1850 to 3800 after harassing me constantly and there was no protective measure in place to stop this from happening. City meditation and City attorneys had informed me of the loophole that was found which leads back to my point that the loophole should be inexcusable and non-existent.

This ordinance, as best practices allow in other municipalities, could allow for a permitting repairs appeal process - that is, that the County could make a narrow determination on the cost of repairs if they want to go above the Tenant Protection amounts. A three-member staff arbitration board could have the role of providing a binding decision on very plain standards on the rare exceptions above.

This could be include in a separate motion to direct staff to include this at a later date or amend it into the current proposal.

Another really important piece and element is to ensure that the protections apply at all steps of the eviction process.

The eviction process includes various stages (ie a notice to vacate, an unlawful detainer, Sheriff's enforcement). This ordinance would clearly protect current and future tenants under threat of eviction – such as those current Isla Vista tenants in CBC & The Sweeps under attack by the multi-billion dollar flipper developer Core Spaces – if and only if this tenant protection applies at *all* stages of the eviction process.

Ethical landlords would ideally see nothing wrong with this as if they aren't pulling these actions, this wouldn't apply to them. These protections are for the ones who do play into bad practice and abuse the current laws and systems because they have

found a way to do so. Thanks for your time and looking forward to a rental world with more integrity and higher standards upheld on those who are renting in the community.

All the best,
Natasha Durel