



**From:** Jennifer Smith <jsmith@lafsb.org>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 27, 2023 9:14 AM  
**To:** Williams, Das; Hartmann, Joan; Laura Capps; Lavagnino, Steve; Nelson, Bob  
**Cc:** sbcob; Alex Entrekin  
**Subject:** Addendum Item 7, # 23-00654, Support (Ordinance to Amend Article IV, Just Cause for Residential Evictions; and to add Article V, Mandatory Right of First Refusal and Mandatory Offer of Residential Lease)

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Dear Chair and Supervisors,

I write in support of the proposed ordinance. We are extremely grateful to the County for acting quickly in what in an emergency situation. I am in and out of meetings today and I am not sure if I will be available when this item is called. However, we wanted to comment on the following items:

- We remain concerned about an increase in eviction activity before this ordinance becomes effective. There remains a huge unmet need for legal help for tenants across the County (and is true across the state of California). There are ways an ordinance can be crafted to help reduce this impact but this proposal does not include any measures to prevent this possibility. There are legal and valid ways to avoid this.
- The County should fund landlord-tenant mediation/conciliation. Most tenants cannot afford to hire a mediator. When the City of Santa Barbara adopted its rules about mandatory lease offers and conciliation, it already had an established mediation program.
- The numbering of the Remedies section is a bit confusing. It appears that the remedies apply to the entire Chapter, but the remedies listing is part of Article IV instead of being it's own section at the end of the ordinance. It would help if this could be clarified on the record.
- It is hard to underscore how dire the rental housing situation is for tenants. We know that even working professionals with incomes above the AMI are having trouble securing housing, let alone students, low-income families, and seniors on fixed incomes. Low-income families and individuals simply cannot compete even when housing is available. For this reason, relocation assistance is simply not enough because it doesn't help the tenant afford rent at a new location (or to income qualify for an available unit, or to compete against those with higher incomes). Those who are currently at risk or who may not be protected by this ordinance are at risk of housing instability and homelessness. It is truly an ongoing crisis, and we urge the County to continue to explore all available means and emergency measures to address this shelter and housing crisis.

While we think there are ways this ordinance could be strengthened, due to the emergent nature of the situation, we support swift approval of this ordinance.

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