



August 17, 2020

The Honorable Members of the Los Angeles City Council  
c/o Office of the City Clerk  
Los Angeles City Hall 200  
N. Spring Street, Rm 395  
Los Angeles, CA 90012  
clerk.budgetandfinancecommittee@lacity.org

Re: Right to Counsel Ordinance /Program / Tenants Facing Eviction

Council File: 18-0610

Dear Councilmembers,

The East Hollywood Neighborhood Council is **in favor of Council File 18-0610**, as proposed by Councilmember Paul Koretz, which calls on the City of Los Angeles to create a Tenants Right to Counsel or Eviction Defense Program.

The 2020 LAHSA Homeless Count revealed L.A. housed more people than ever, yet our housing affordability crisis drove a net rise in homelessness. Additionally, due to COVID-19 related financial burdens, HCIDLA identified over 100,000 households that are at risk of eviction once the eviction moratorium is lifted. This could be of detriment to displacing more angelinos than ever. The City of LA estimates that 30,000 eviction notices are filed each year, yet 90% of tenants have no lawyer present during court proceedings while 90% of landlords do. Most if not all of these at risk households due to the COVID-19 pandemic cannot afford legal representation when fighting their eviction cases. The proposed ordinance calls on The City to address this disparity by funding the legal fees of tenants facing eviction who cannot afford their own representation.

There is precedent for a program of this scope, with proven success. New York City passed a law in 2017 to subsidize the legal fees of low-income tenants in housing courts and saw residential evictions drop by 11% in the areas benefited by the program, with households represented by lawyers about 34% more likely to stay housed. San Francisco's recently

approved 'Proposition F' mandates the city to fund tenant-legal defense services to any renter that requires them, regardless of income.

The East Hollywood Neighborhood Council **strongly supports funding legal representation for those facing unjust and unlawful evictions in order to prevent thousands more of our neighbors from experiencing homelessness.**

Sincerely,

East Hollywood Neighborhood Council

CC:

Hon. Mitch O'Farrell Councilmember,  
13th District Los Angeles  
City Hall 200 N. Spring Street, Rm 480  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Hon. Nury Martinez City Council President  
Councilmember, 6th District Los Angeles  
City Hall 200 N Spring Steet, Ste 470  
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Mayor Eric Garcetti  
Los Angeles City Hall  
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