



"Great Apartments Start Here!"

Danielle Leidner-Peretz
Director, Government Affairs &
External Relations
danielle@aagla.org
213.384.4131; Ext. 309

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Via Electronic Mail

Hon. Mayor D'Amico and Members of City Council
West Hollywood City Hall
8300 Santa Monica Boulevard
West Hollywood, California 90069

Re: *Zone Text Amendment: Dwelling Unit Clarification (Agenda Item 3.D.)*

Dear Hon. Mayor D'Amico and Members of the West Hollywood City Council:

The purpose of this letter is to express our concern about the proposed Zone Text Amendment (ZTA) requiring that dwelling units in West Hollywood be leased for an initial term of at least one year. The proposed ordinance will most certainly negatively impact both West Hollywood's rental housing providers and their renters by eliminating any flexibility to determine the tenancy duration that best suits the housing provider's and renter's circumstances. For various reasons, renter's may not be able to commit to one-year or longer lease terms due to anticipated employment, relocation or other life changes.

Our Apartment Association represents numerous small rental housing providers owning or managing rental properties in West Hollywood, the majority of whom are often characterized as "mom and pop" owners that own 5 or fewer rental units. Our members recognize that individuals seeking rental housing do so for a variety of reasons and work to provide tenancy options based on a renter's expressed needs.

The ordinance is exclusionary and would serve to preclude West Hollywood as an option for many individuals in need of shorter-term living arrangements. Renters seeking short-term (less than one year) housing options do so for a number of reasons, among them, as a result of temporary employment, active military duty, to temporarily relocate in order to care for loved ones, temporary displacement from primary home following a natural disaster and homeowners who have sold their homes and are in need of interim rental housing pending moving into a new single family home. Regardless of the underlying reason, these individuals and families, generally do not wish to or simply cannot afford to stay for an extended period in a hotel which offers limited amenities and lacks the feeling of a home and the stability it offers. For many of these individuals, a mandatory one-year lease is not feasible financially or otherwise. In addition, as the ZTA is applicable to all



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dwelling units built on or after May 1, 2001, it would make it difficult for individuals to rent their homes for a period of less than a year while they are on a short-term sabbatical or military duty.

Moreover, the ordinance language does not clearly identify whether it is applicable to existing and new tenancies or new tenancies only. If the ordinance applies to existing tenancies, it would place renters with month to month tenancies at risk of displacement. Rental housing providers would be required to issue these renters new one-year lease agreements which would cause existing renters who cannot afford or simply do not need a year long tenancy to be forced to find alternate housing elsewhere.

Flexible lease terms are vital for so many renters who are working in the entertainment, construction, sales, and medical industries, for individuals going through a transitional period and those who have just experienced the loss or damage to their homes following a natural disaster. **We urge the Council to amend the ordinance to require that rental housing providers offer renters a one-year lease and enable the renter to accept the one-year lease or a shorter lease period based on their needs and circumstances.**

Alternatively, as this issue and the ZTA is being advanced by the Council to address a specific development and corporate related housing, **we urge the Council to amend the ordinance limiting its applicability to "corporate housing" which resolves the issue and maintains the City of West Hollywood as a city that welcomes all renters of diverse needs.**

Thank you for your time and consideration of these matters. If you have any questions, please call me at (213) 384-4131; Ext. 309 or contact me via electronic mail at danielle@aagla.org.

Very truly yours,

Danielle Leidner-Peretz