



"Great Apartments Start Here!"

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Via Electronic Mail

Hon. Mayor Emily Gabel-Luddy and
Members of the Burbank City Council
Burbank City Hall
275 East Olive Avenue
Burbank, California 91502

Re: Seismic Retrofit of Privately-Owned Buildings (Agenda Item 8)

Dear Mayor Gabel-Luddy and Members of the City Council;

The Apartment Association of Greater Los Angeles' (AAGLA) commends the City of Burbank for ensuring the safety of its residents by identifying buildings that are potentially vulnerable to the impacts of a major earthquake and developing a Soft-Story Seismic Retrofit Program. It is indisputable and critically important to ensure that buildings are structurally sound to withstand the impact of a major earthquake, and that the City can mitigate loss of life and injury resulting from a natural disaster.

As the City Council deliberates establishing a seismic retrofitting program and Staff's recommendations for embarking upon a targeted approach focused on soft-story structures; we urge the City Council to be cognizant of the enormous upfront costs associated with seismic retrofitting projects that owners must bear. We appreciate the Staff Report's acknowledgement of owner cost concerns and the need for exploring financial incentives. Further, we support Staff's recommendations related to conducting community outreach meetings with building owners and renters, events to provide owners with access to resources such as seismic retrofitting design consultants and contractors, and financial incentives such as reducing building permit and plan check fees.

A seismic retrofitting program addresses a vital societal need by ensuring the safety of Burbank's residents. A seismic retrofitting program necessitates a thoughtful and streamlined approach in the program's development that accounts for a wide range of factors involved. The program should provide for sufficient compliance timeframes and extensions. As several localities have established similar programs, it is essential that adequate time be provided for owners to



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complete the necessary work. It is becoming increasingly more difficult for owners to locate a reputable company with availability and as a result, contractors practicing in this area are experiencing backlogs and prices are increasing both due to demand and due to tariffs on steel and other required materials. Furthermore, as stated earlier, seismic retrofitting projects are a significant cost burden which, in light of the extremely likely passage of Assembly Bill 1482 that will limit rent increases and an owner's ability to recover the significant costs of retrofitting, such costs should be shared by owners and renters. The financial burden must not be placed solely on owners, particularly small rental housing providers who have limited financial resources. We urge the Council to institute financial initiatives such as low-cost financing to alleviate this overwhelming financial burden. Finally, as seismic retrofitting work often involves the loss of resident parking for extended time periods, we urge the City Council to contemplate a plan to facilitate temporary on-street parking in close proximity to displaced renter's homes in under-parked neighborhoods.

Thank you for your time and consideration of these important issues as you discuss the advancement of a mandatory seismic retrofit program. 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