



"Great Apartments Start Here!"

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Via Electronic Mail

Homelessness and Poverty Committee
City of Los Angeles
City Hall
200 North Spring Street, Room 1010
Los Angeles, California 90012

**RE: HHAPP Funding Request – Eviction Prevention and Homeless Prevention Services-
City Budget - Line Item (Agenda Item 12)**

Dear Members of the Homelessness and Poverty Committee:

The Apartment Association of Greater Los Angeles' (AAGLA) has strong concerns about the proposal to allocate additional funding from the State's fiscal year 2019-20 Homeless Housing, Assistance, and Prevention Program (HHAPP) in order to supplement the City's Eviction Defense Program.

The Eviction Defense Program as set forth in the Los Angeles Housing + Community Investment Department (HCID+LA) November 1, 2019 report recommended a phased-in approach within three designated zip codes. We commend HCID+LA's recommended implementation plan. Instituting the program in phases and within targeted geographic areas will facilitate measurable indicators of program success and deficiencies.

During the prior December 11, 2019, Special Joint meeting of the Housing Committee and the Personnel and Animal Welfare Committee, in which the Eviction Defense Program and HCID+LA report was discussed, a question was raised regarding the appropriateness of the City's role in providing legal representation to the City's residents in any context. In consideration of the questionable nature of the City's function in this realm coupled with the fact that more than 70% of evictions are due to non-payment of rent, the most impactful and immediate means to reduce evictions is through rent subsidies and supportive services.

AAGLA has repeatedly supported the establishment of a comprehensive program that



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focuses on homelessness prevention and that addresses illegal evictions. We commend the City for including rental assistance and supportive services as part of the program and for providing opportunities where renters may obtain short-term and longer-term assistance based on their individual circumstances.

As the Committee contemplates the \$6 million funding request set forth in the motion, AAGLA request’s that a detailed breakdown relative to the funding allocation be provided and an explanation of how the additional funding will facilitate the stated objective. We urge the Committee to allocate additional funding towards the eviction prevention component of the pilot program related to outreach and education for renters and owners, and also for rental subsidies and supportive services, so that a larger pool of eligible renters can access both immediate and long-term assistance that is customized to their situation whether it be a recent job loss, need for financial literacy education, or due to unforeseen health issues.

Further, we strongly urge the Committee to limit any further funding for the provision of legal representation to renters facing eviction pending completion of Phase 1 of the program and subsequent thorough review of program effectiveness. At that juncture, the City will best be able to determine needed program modifications.

Thank you for your consideration of AAGLA’s concerns and recommendations as you deliberate the \$6 million funding request in HHAPP funds to augment the “Eviction Prevention and Homeless Prevention Services line item in the City Budget. 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