



*"Great Apartments Start Here!"*

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February 28, 2020  
**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: Amendments to Rent Stabilization Ordinance – Relocation Fees (Agenda Item 6. A.)**

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

On Monday, March 2, 2020, the West Hollywood City Council will consider amendments to the City's Rent Stabilization Ordinance (RSO) regarding painting schedules for properties designated as cultural resources and relocation fees (See Agenda Item 6.A). The Apartment Association of Greater Los Angeles has strong concerns about the City's proposal to remove the following language under Section 17.52.020 (b) which currently states "a tenant cannot waive his or her right to receive a relocation fee required by this chapter; **however, if a tenant does not vacate his or her rental unit by the deadline specified in a valid no fault termination notice and if the landlord has not granted an extension, the tenant forfeits the relocation fee and must repay the fee to the landlord.**"

Elimination of the bolded relocation fee forfeiture language contained in the ordinance is problematic as it would likely result in an owner's loss of a legal remedy in recovering relocation fees. The staff report indicates that the amendment and removal of the fee forfeiture language is not intended to eliminate the renter's obligation to return the relocation fee within the prescribed timeframe but rather places the issue before the court. As a result, housing providers could experience delays and unnecessary costs pursuing these refunds through an already backlogged court system.

Should the City decide to remove the specified language, it is critical that the ordinance specify, at a minimum, the Court's authority to order that if a renter fails to vacate the unit in a timely manner that the renter forfeits the relocation fee paid and must repay the fee to the owner. It is equally important to recognize, as raised by several Commissioners during the February 13, 2020, Rent Stabilization Commission meeting, that this amendment may necessitate that owners engage in a costly eviction proceeding in order to recover the relocation fee. This would be unduly burdensome, particularly for small owners, who have limited resources to pay relocation fees and



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must then initiate litigation in order to seek recovery of previously paid relocation fees. We urge the City Council to reject the proposed relocation fee amendment.

If however, the Council decides to advance the amendment, we strongly recommend that the proposed ordinance be amended to clearly state that the court has the authority to order that the relocation fee be forfeited if the renter does not vacate the unit within the time allotted by state law.

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](mailto:danielle@aagla.org).

Very truly yours,

Danielle Leidner-Peretz