



June 21, 2023

Honorable Maria Elena Durazo
California Senate
1021 O Street, Room 7530
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SB 567 (Durazo) SUPPORT

Dear Senator Durazo:

Our organizations are pleased to support SB 567, the Homelessness Prevention Act, which will protect California renters from unjust evictions and exorbitant rent increases. According to a recent study by the U.S. Government Accountability Office, a \$100 median rent increase led to a 9% increase in homelessness. By enacting these protections your bill promises to prevent more people from being pushed into homelessness and provide greater housing stability for low-income renters, predominantly people of color, who are disproportionately impacted by the state's housing crisis.

In 2019, California enacted AB 1482 (Chiu), the Tenant Protection Act (TPA), which provided some protections for certain California renters. For renters covered by the TPA, it established both a rent cap to prevent the most egregious rent gouging and just cause eviction protections that for the first time at the state level provided that renters cannot be evicted unless the landlord can establish that they have a valid reason for the eviction. These just cause protections allow a landlord to evict a tenant for at-fault causes such as non-payment of rent, but limit the circumstances in which a landlord can evict a tenant when the tenant is not at fault.

Between 2017 and 2022, homelessness increased 30% across the state, faster than anywhere else in the country. Now that eviction moratoriums and many of the pandemic-era renter protections that kept families housed are gone, homelessness will continue to rise at an even faster rate unless we act. Over the last several years, property values have increased substantially. As landlords and homeowners continue to grow their equity, essentially profiting off of the state's dire housing shortage, we must ensure renters have housing stability by strengthening eviction protections and ensuring that there is robust enforcement of the TPA.

While helpful, the TPA contains numerous loopholes that leave renters vulnerable to eviction. Our organizations hear from renters every day who are covered by the TPA but for whom the Act's protections are illusory. One of the central goals of the TPA was to prevent unjust evictions without cause. Unfortunately, covered renters too often find that the “no-fault” provisions allowing an eviction for owner-move-in, substantial rehabilitation, or withdrawal of the unit from the rental market provide no meaningful protection at all. Landlords too easily claim to be doing one of these things without any requirement of proof or any post-eviction obligation to follow through. “Withdrawal from the rental market” and “substantial rehabilitation” in particular have become magic words for landlords seeking a free pass to avoid all of the protections of the TPA.

Because the law lacks sufficient parameters—parameters that are common in many locally enacted rent stabilization ordinances—landlords can assert a no-fault just cause as the reason for eviction without having to prove anything about their actual intent. Tenants facing an unjust eviction cloaked in these magic words are nearly powerless to defend themselves. The result is rising evictions and, for the most vulnerable tenants, the very real prospect of homelessness.

SB 567 responds to the present-day reality faced by millions of California renters and provides greater housing stability for more renter households by strengthening the Tenant Protection Act, closing easily exploitable loopholes, and providing for robust enforcement. The bill:

- Provides greater specificity around the allowable “no fault” just causes for eviction to address rampant abuse of these provisions.
- Enhances tenants’ ability to defend themselves in eviction cases by requiring landlords to strictly comply with the TPA.
- Expands both public and private enforcement of the TPA.

As inflation soars and state and local eviction protections enacted during the pandemic come to an end, the gaps in existing state protections are impacting more and more renters. The Homelessness Prevention Act will provide critical safeguards to stop abuses and ensure that renters can stay in their homes. Thank you for your leadership on this important issue. We look forward to working with you to enact these critical protections.

Sincerely,

Alliance of Californians for Community Empowerment (ACCE) (Co-Sponsor)
California Rural Legal Assistance Foundation (Co-Sponsor)
Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability (Co-Sponsor)

PICO California (Co-Sponsor)
Public Advocates (Co-Sponsor)
Western Center on Law and Poverty (Co-Sponsor)
MVP Million Voters Project

Faith In Action East Bay	Barbara Lafitte-Oluwole
Navigating Structures	Rain Chamberlain
Housing is a Human Right Orange County (HHROC)	Pat Davis
Catholic Charities of Stockton- Environmental Justice Program Ground game LA	Ector Olivares
Parable of the Sower Intentional Community Cooperative Housing Rights Committee of San Francisco	Sonja Verdugo
End Poverty in California (EPIC)	Aleta Toure
Pasadena Tenants Union	Sarah Sherburn-Zimmer
California Environmental Voters	Devon Gray
The Greenlining Institute	Ryan Bell
Black Women for Wellness Action Project	Marquis Mason
CLUE: Clergy & Laity United for Economic Justice	Holden Weisman
East Bay Alliance for a Sustainable Economy (EBASE)	Onyemma C. Obiekea
Greater Napa Valley Fair Housing Center	Adam Overton
Oakland Tenants Union	Kelly Zhao
Pomona United for Stable Housing PUSH	Pablo Zatarain
St. Luke's/ San Lucas Episcopal Church, Long Beach	Thomas Alexander
National Alliance to End Homelessness	Yesenia Miranda Meza
Viet Rainbow of Orange County	Rev. Jane Gould
San Gabriel Valley Tenants Alliance	Alex Visotzky
Housing Now!	Uyen Hoang
Communities for a New California Action Fund	Jorge Rivera
CADEM Renters Council	Francisco Dueñas
Alameda County Democratic Party	Samantha Valadez
CHIRLA (Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights)	Igor Tregub
ACLU California Action	Igor Tregub
Evolve California	Rita Medina
Orange County Equality Coalition	Carlos Marquez III
UC Student Association	Ben Grieff
Fresno Tenants Union	Felicity Figueroa
Muslim Public Affairs Council	Alia Sky
CEJA	Shar Thompson
Public Law Center	Rebecca Husaini
Law Foundation of Silicon Valley	Raquel Mason
Esperanza Community Housing Corporation	Adam Morton
entro Legal de la Raza	Tristia Bauman
Housing Rights Center	Rabeya Sen
Healing and Justice Center	Monique Berlanga
Community Legal Services in East Palo Alto	Javier Beltran
The Sacramento Environmental Justice Coalition	Jorge Rivera
Smart Justice CA	Keith Ogden
COPE/New Life Christian Church of Fontana	Herman Barahona
Fresno Homeless Union	Natasha Minsker
We Are Not Invisible	Pastor Samuel Casey
Greenfield Walking Group	Cindy Piombino
Inland Congregations United for Change (ICUC)	Dez Martinez
Resilience OC	Gema Perez
Orange County Voter Information Project (OCVIP)	Tom Dolan
Orange County Environmental Justice (OCEJ)	Claudia Perez
OCCCCO	Gloria Alvarado
Orange County Asian and Pacific Islander Community Alliance (OCAPICA)	Patricia Flores
California Healthy Nail Salon Collaborative	Miguel Hernandez
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People's Budget Orange County	Lorena Melgarejo
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Sacramento Act
Eviction Defense Network
Berkeley Tenants Union
MHAction
Sonoma Valley Housing Group
Chispa
Housing Rights Initiative
InnerCity Struggle
San Francisco Rising
Center on Race, Poverty, & the Environment
California Nurses Association/National Nurses United (CNA)
Council of Community Housing Organizations
Orange County Mobile Home Residents Coalition
Fresno Barrios Unidos
Center for Community Action and Environmental Justice (CCA EJ)
OCCORD
United Way of Greater Los Angeles
San Diego Tenants United
True North
Friends Committee on Legislation of California
Urban Habitat
Pomona United for Stable Housing PUSH
Human Impact Partners
Bend the Arc Jewish Action
Inner City Law Center
Latino Health Access
National Housing Law Project
Justice in Aging
TechEquity Collaborative
Starting Over, Inc.
Sacramento Tenants Union
Legal Aid of Sonoma County
Canal Alliance
Equal Rights Advocates
National Association of Social Workers - California Chapter
SEIU California
Public Counsel
Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund
Mental Health Advocacy Services
Housing and Economic Rights Advocates
Disability Rights California
Monterey County Renters United
Golden State Opportunity
San Francisco Anti-Displacement Coalition
Working Partnerships USA
Strategic Concepts in Organizing and Policy Education (SCOPE)
Oakland Rising
Communities for a New California
Community Coalition
Dolores Huerta Foundation
Long Beach Residents Empowered, LiBRE
CA Calls
Central Coast Alliance United for A Sustainable Economy (CAUSE)
California Central Valley Journey for Justice
Mi Familia Vota
Courage California
Filipino Advocates for Justice
California Alliance for Retired Americans
The Children's Partnership

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PowerCA Action
AAPIs for Civic Empowerment Education Fund
Fannie Lou Hamer Institute
PolicyLink
Comunidades Aliadas Tomando Accion
San Francisco Muslim Community Center
Community Coalition
Faith in the Valley
San Diego Organizing Project
Working Partnerships USA
People Acting in Community Together
Working Partnerships, USA
East Bay Housing Organizations

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