



October 20, 2017

Assemblyman David Chiu
Capitol Office, Room 4112
P.O. Box 942849, Sacramento, CA 94249

Dear Assemblyman Chiu:

Thank you for holding a hearing titled, 'The Housing Affordability Crisis: Exploring the Effects of Renter Displacement.' I look forward to your committee's discussion. Housing bills recently signed by the Governor may be a promising start on the housing supply problem, but the laws will not address many tenants' challenge today: housing affordability and displacement.

As an organizer for tenants' interests in Beverly Hills, I regularly hear from seniors and families with children who feel embattled as they try to stay housed. They worry about 10% annual rent increases and/or being summarily displaced with just 60 days notice to vacate. Until our City Council put in place an interim policy to put the brakes on displacement, tenants were vulnerable to displacement in an overheated housing market. And those in more affordable units were more vulnerable than most.

As a tenants' advocate I look at the bigger picture too and see how entire properties are removed from the rental market. The loss of relatively-affordable units exacerbates the supply problem and drives up the cost of the remaining units. One clear outcome: some tenants are so afraid of displacement that none wants to speak up about substandard conditions or landlord harassment.

Residents who rent must look to the legislature to protect us. You can put an end to displacement under the Ellis Act. You can amend or repeal Costa Hawkins. We want our fellow tenants in single-family homes and condominium units to enjoy protection too, and we want to see an end to the categorical exemption from rent control enjoyed by post-1995 rental property owners.

I support your bill, AB 1506, to repeal the Costa Hawkins and I support AB 982 to extend the window for Ellis displacement to one year. Most immediately, I support your effort to hold a committee hearing so that we can begin to grapple with the legacy effects of past legislation. In Beverly Hills and beyond, tenants are residents who deserve to feel secure in our homes.

Sincerely,

Mark Elliot