

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR HILDA L. SOLIS

July 25, 2023

AND LINDSEY P. HORVATH

Urgent Actions to Support LA County Tenants

On June 22, 2022, the Board of Supervisors adopted a motion to establish a land bank pilot in Los Angeles County. This important program would support existing affordable housing infrastructure and foster an increased stock of affordable housing. The June 22, 2022, motion directed the CEO to develop a plan and report to the Board with options for securing at least \$50 million in seed funding to create the land bank pilot.

Consistent with the motion, on September 13, 2022, the CEO recommended and the Board approved \$40 million in American Rescue Plan Act enabled funding for the land bank pilot. The Board approved an additional \$10 million in Affordable Housing Trust Fund carryover funding for the land bank pilot when it approved the Final Changes Budget on June 26, 2023, bringing the total initial investment in the land bank pilot to \$50 million.

During the July 11, 2023, Board meeting, the Board considered and adopted a motion to approve a “Right to Counsel” ordinance for the unincorporated areas of Los Angeles by the end of 2023. During the meeting, the Board heard testimony from more

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than 100 tenants who not only supported establishing a right to counsel for tenants facing eviction, but urgently pressed the Board for additional supports for tenants “right now” as they faced potential evictions, disruptive housing displacements, and destabilizing housing uncertainty. This testimony is consistent with advocacy by individual tenants, tenant groups, and community-based organizations who warn of a new eviction wave when federally funded support programs wind down over the coming months and years.

Indeed, the Right to Counsel program will join other efforts the Board has taken in anticipation of an eviction crisis. As one example, in January of this year the Board directed the CEO to identify and allocate at least \$45 million in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding to establish a new landlord and tenant rent relief program administered by the Department of Consumer and Business Affairs. This rent relief program is slated to launch this summer.

The CEO’s Affordable Housing Unit is finalizing a program design for the land bank pilot and will be identifying potential program administrators to launch and operate the land bank during the pilot phase. The land bank pilot is a critical tool in the affordable housing toolbox that the County must leverage to help address housing scarcity and affordability for our lowest-income residents and families. However, given the urgency with which governments must act to support tenants, the County should evaluate whether it makes sense to reallocate some funding from the land bank pilot, which is completing its design phase, to help tenants who are in crisis now.

WE, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors direct the CEO, in collaboration with the Director of the Department of Consumer and Business Affairs, to report back in 14 days on the feasibility of reallocating up to \$25.0 million in land bank

funding to support County tenant protections. In its report back, the CEO should specifically address the feasibility of allocating \$15.0 million for landlord and tenant rental assistance and \$10.0 million to support the Right to Counsel program's first year of implementation slated for Fiscal Year 2024-25.

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