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Via Electronic Mail

Hon. Mayor Glean Davis, and
the Members of the Santa Monica City Council
1685 Main Street, Room 250
Santa Monica, California 9

Re: Resolution for Restructuring and Increase of Solid Waste Collection Rates (Agenda Item 12B)

Dear Honorable Mayor Davis and Members of the Santa Monica City Council:

At tonight's City Council meeting, the City Council will consider the adoption of a resolution for restructuring and increasing the solid waste collection rates that will result in **increases of 20.5% to 23.5%** (based on staff's examples for four-unit and ten-unit properties, respectively).

The Apartment Association of Greater Los Angeles (AAGLA) represents thousands of rental housing providers throughout Los Angeles County, including Santa Monica. Most of our members are independent, mom-and-pop rental housing providers with the vast majority owning 20 or fewer units and many owning a single small property. Independent owners typically use their small property to supplement their retirements and to pay for daily living expenses and medical care. These independent owners have been particularly hard hit by the nearly 3 years of statewide and countywide COVID-19 moratoriums causing hundreds of thousands of dollars in lost rent industry wide. As they typically own a single property, they have far fewer units to spread the financial harm caused by a non-paying renter and as a result are struggling to be able to afford to keep their properties.

This proposal to increase solid waste collection fees so drastically in this unique time immediately after a once-in-one-hundred-years pandemic and at the very beginning of property owners finally starting the recovery process from the financial devastation that the pandemic caused is both heartless and shortsighted.

Such a drastic increase will only continue to force more mom-and-pop owners out of the housing business whereby they will sell their properties to development corporations. As a result, Santa Monica will lose more of its scarce, naturally occurring affordable rental properties. As these sales close, it will also cause mass relocations as renters from entire buildings will be forced to move and seek new rentals to call home. For those fortunate rental housing providers and renters that keep their existing properties and rental units,

these increased costs will be yet another financial burden for them to bear during an already extremely financially difficult time given ongoing high inflation rates.

We realize that the City is in a difficult financial situation itself due to increased waste collection costs. However, now is not the time to undertake major restructuring of the fees for multifamily properties as currently proposed by staff nor is it time to create new and “enhanced” programs that independent rental housing providers cannot afford. **Therefore, we request that the City delay implementation of the new calculations for a minimum of 2 years in order to provide sufficient time for mom-and-pop rental housing providers and their renters to adjust to these increased costs. We also request that a larger percentage of the increases be shifted towards the later years of the proposal.**

In addition, we would urge the Council to use remaining American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to create a new rebate program for independent, mom-and-pop rental housing owners to assist them in keeping their properties by reducing these new solid waste collection fees.

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 janet@aagla.org.

Sincerely,

Janet M. Gagnon

Janet M. Gagnon, Esq.

CC: Daniel Yukelson, Executive Director, Apartment Association of Greater Los Angeles