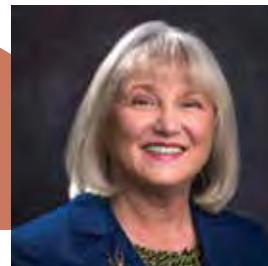


# President's Message



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Well, this truly is a call to action.

On January 27<sup>th</sup>, the Santa Barbara City Council voted 4 to 3 to impose a "rent freeze" for the City of Santa Barbara making it the ONLY city in California with such a government overreaching.

The ordinance did not achieve the fifth vote to make it an urgency measure taking immediate effect and it therefore became effective 30 days after the vote – February 26, 2026.

This rent freeze prohibits housing providers from increasing the rent until December 31, 2026 or until the Rent Stabilization Program has been developed for the City.

The ordinance applies to all residential rental units in the City for which a certificate of occupancy was issued on or before February 1, 1995, except rental units that are separately alienable from other units on the same APN, rental units in hotels, motels, inns, tourist homes, lodging and rooming houses and boarding houses, or other similar temporary lodgings, rental units in a hospital, convent, monastery, extended medical care facility, asylum, non-profit home for the aged, dormitory owned and operated by an accredited institution of higher education, treatment or recovery program facilities, rental units owned, operated or managed by a public agency or not-for-profit organization and subject to a recorded covenant or other rent limitation restriction, and rental units rented to Section 8 program tenants.

Exempt from the ordinance are single family homes (for now), condominiums not owned by a REIT or a corporation, and those properties with a certificate of occupancy after 1995 (for now).

The newly appointed (11/18/2025) City Attorney John Doimas could not answer Councilmember Mike Jordan's question about whether duplexes are exempt.

In other words, this rent freeze affects almost all aging housing stock that provides rentals to the middle-income workers.

This comes at a time when insurance rates are skyrocketing; contractors's labor and materials are at an all-time high; and utility costs keep going up at alarming rates.

This ordinance must be challenged as a "taking of private property rights."

This WILL reduce the value of your rental property investment.

SBRPA has a legal action fund portal on its website that allows you to contribute to this legal challenge. SBRPA is a 501(c)(6) corporation; so, your contributions are not tax deductible; but, that also means that you can contribute any amount without having to disclose how much you contributed. This fund will be used to hire an outside attorney with a great deal of litigation and municipal code knowledge and experience to fight this fight but all housing providers need to contribute.

The City Council also voted in by a 4 to 3 vote, changes to the Santa Barbara Municipal Code concerning taking units off the market. Effective February 26, 2026, if an owner wants to take a rental unit off the market, he/she must now take ALL rental units on that APN off the market AND once done those units cannot go back on the rental market for FIVE YEARS. This is a provision that "runs with the land" and not with the owner. So, if the owner sells within that five-year period, the new owner must also abide by this provision.

Please continue to monitor the SBRPA website for notifications about important City Council meetings where we need your help to tell your experiences.

We appreciate your membership and participation.

Betty L. Jeppesen, President



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