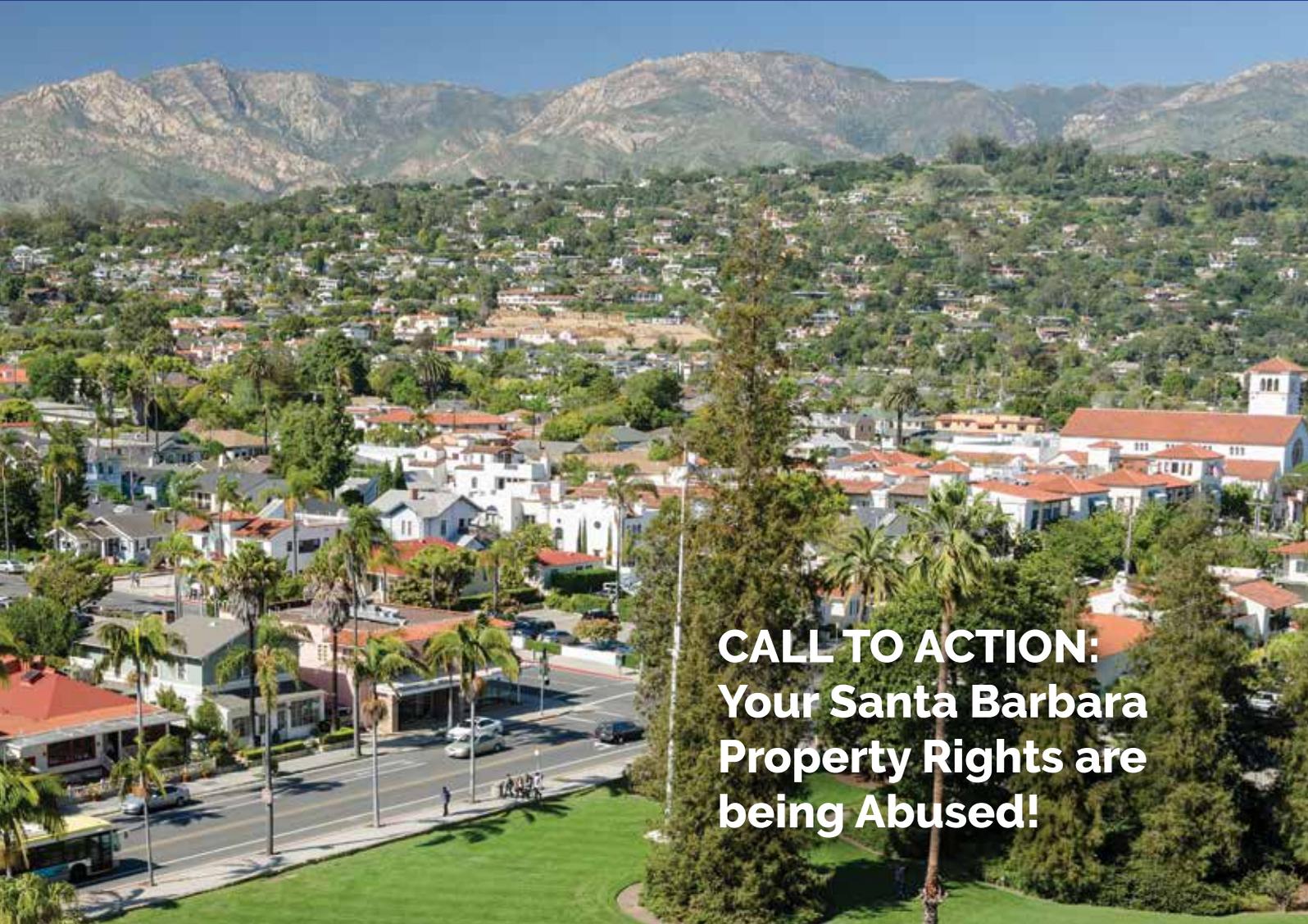


Mar 2026

SANTA BARBARA
RENTAL PROPERTY

news

CALIFORNIA'S CENTRAL COAST RESOURCE FOR RENTAL PROPERTY OWNERS, MANAGERS & SUPPLIERS



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March 2026

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President's Message



Betty L. Jeppesen Esq. • Attorney at Law and Real Estate Broker

Well, this truly is a call to action.

On January 27th, 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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6670 SUENO RD

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SBRPA Calendar



Upcoming Events

SBRPA Upcoming Events

None listed for March



march 2026

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17 St. Patrick's Day	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				



2026 Q1 Events and Programs

Advocate

March 24-25, 2026 Grand Hyatt Washington DC

Advocate – NAA's annual advocacy conference – is the prime opportunity to meet with your representatives by joining rental housing suppliers, property managers, owners and operators in Washington, D.C. NAA Governance meetings will continue March 26-27. See page 29 for more info.

More information on 2026 events is available on the NAA's website: naahq.org.

The landlord for SBRPA's office building requires the outside doors be locked at all times due to security issues. If you want to visit the SBRPA office, please contact us in advance so we can unlock the door for you! We would love to have you visit.

Email admin@sbrpa.org or call 805-687-7007

Welcome New Members

Roberto Pregadio (Driven Capital Partners, LLC),
 Cameron Porter, Nancy Kaller, Jena Harris,
 Trevor Flor (Aimpoint Investments),
 Deborah Toga, Sabrina Bell-Bonadeo, Rachelle Pegg,
 Luke Xing, Giovany Reyes, Alejandra Gutiérrez,
 & Greystar St. Claire (St Claire Apartment Homes)

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CALL TO ACTION: Your Property Rights in Santa Barbara are under Assault



Santa Barbara City Council approves temporary Rent Freeze on 4-3 vote. *Newshawk photo*

Recent actions by the Santa Barbara City Council may significantly affect property owners throughout the city.

By a 4-3 vote, the Council approved a rental freeze effective February 26, 2026, retroactive to December 16, 2025. This measure temporarily prohibits rent increases during the freeze period.

The four supporting votes came from council members Meagan Harmon, Wendy Santamaria, Kristen Sneddon and Oscar Gutierrez. Voting against: Mayor Randy Rowse and Councilmen Eric Friedman and Mike Jordan.



L-R: Oscar Gutierrez (District 3), Wendy Santamaria (District 1), Eric Friedman (District 5), Mayor Randy Rowse, Mike Jordan (District 2), Kristen Sneddon (Mayor Pro Tempore & District 4), Meagan Harmon (District 6). *Photo, City of Santa Barbara website.*

The Council has also proposed a rent cap set at 60% of the Consumer Price Index (CPI), and the City Finance Committee is evaluating two additional measures: An

increase of up to ten times the current transfer tax on both commercial and residential property transactions (commonly referred to as a "mansion tax" proposal).

These items are under review, and their outcomes could have lasting effects on housing investment, operations, and local economic conditions.

The Santa Barbara Rental Property Association (SBRPA) is committed to advocating for sound housing policy, fair property rights, and a balanced approach to regulation that benefits all community members — tenants and housing providers alike.

To assist with ongoing legal and policy advocacy, you may contribute to the SBRPA Legal Action Fund.

100% of your contribution will be directed to legal expenses associated with this effort. Suggested donation: \$500/unit or more. Go to www.sbrpa.org to make your donation.



The lengthy meeting lasted more than 3 hours and was attended by both renters and property owners, *Newshawk photo*

NOTE: Contributions to the SBRPA Legal Action Fund are not tax-deductible as charitable donations but may qualify as business expenses. Please consult your tax advisor.



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CalRHA Legislative Updates



Kate Bell, KateBellStrategies.com

February 2026

Political Update/Governor's Race

The competition to replace the term-limited Gavin Newsom is escalating, making the current gubernatorial contest in California the most unpredictable in decades. As of February 2026, with almost a third of voters still uncommitted and no obvious leader, a large group of contenders—including seasoned politicians, law enforcement officials, and wealthy non-traditional candidates—is fiercely competing for key organizational endorsements. The most recent poll released February 18th actually has Republican Steve Hilton in the lead, given the democratic vote is split between so many candidates, and Eric Swalwell as the leading Democrat. You may access the poll here and below is a summary of the leading candidates.

Democrat Xavier Becerra. The former U.S. Health Secretary and state Attorney General emphasizes protecting California's health care systems and civil rights from federal interference. He is endorsed by several state legislators Senator Eloise Reyes, Senator Bob Archuleta, Senator Melissa Hurtado, Senator Sabrina Cervantes, the California State Council of Laborer and the California Faculty Association.



Xavier Becerra

Democrat Matt Mahan. The San Jose Mayor and former tech entrepreneur focuses on government accountability, reducing homelessness through interim shelter, and addressing retail theft. As the most recent entrant into the race, his team is still building out their endorsements — expect a series of announcements over the next few weeks. He is supported by tech and endorsed by Rep. Sam Liccardo (D-16) and Mahan's predecessor in San Jose and Rick Caruso, Los Angeles businessman and former mayoral candidate.



Matt Mahan

Democrat Katie Porter. The former U.S. Congresswoman and consumer advocate centers her campaign on fighting corporate influence, expanding housing access and implementing universal health care. Lines for the year. Endorsed by *EMILYs List*, the nation's largest Elect Democratic Women, IBEW, the International Brotherhood of Teamsters (California), and Congressmen Dave Min (CA-47) and Derek Tran (CA-45).



Katie Porter

Democrat Tom Steyer. The billionaire activist and businessman is running on a platform of affordability, pledging to build 1 million homes and lower utility costs. He is supported by Michael Brune, former Sierra Club director and former White House advisors John Podesta, Former Senior Advisor to the President for International Climate Policy, and Rep. Ro Khanna, as well as the state Legislators Isaac Bryan, Alex Lee, and Ash Kalra. He is also endorsed by the California Nurses Association and the California School Employees Association.



Tom Steyer

Democrat Eric Swalwell. The U.S. Congressman and former prosecutor highlights his experience in federal oversight and is endorsed by US Senator Adam Schiff (D-CA), Rep. Nanette Barragán (D-44), Chair of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, Rep. Jimmy Gomez (D-34): Founder of the Congressional Renters Caucus, Rep. Doris Matsui (D-07), Rep. Adam Gray (D-13): Representing the Central Valley, the California Professional



Eric Swalwell

Continued on page 13

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Firefighters (CPF), former gubernatorial candidate, Stephen Cloobek, businessman, the California Medical Association, and Assemblymember Patrick Ahrens and Nick Schultz.

Democrat Antonio Villaraigosa.

The former Los Angeles Mayor and Assembly Speaker presents himself as a seasoned negotiator who can manage the state's budget while prioritizing infrastructure and cost-of-living relief. He is backed by Karen Bass, Los Angeles Mayor, his campaign co-chair and helps solidify his base in the state's largest city. He is endorsed by Barbara Boxer, former U.S. Senator, who serves as his campaign co-chair, Assemblymembers Esmeralda Soria and Tina McKinnor, Senators Bob Archuleta, Maria Elena Durazo, and former Speakers John Perez and Fabian Nunez. PORAC, the Building and Construction Trades Council, IBEW, local Operating Engineers and Teamster.



Antonio Villaraigosa

Democrat Betty Yee.

The former State Controller and tax board member emphasizes fiscal discipline, long-term climate resilience and making the state's financial systems more transparent. She is supported by Progressive Democrats of America (PDA), the AAPI Victory Fund, Mexican American Bar Association PAC (MABA PAC), and National Women's Political Caucus of California, as well as Assemblymember Gail Pellerin and local elected officials.



Betty Yee

Republican Chad Bianco.

The Riverside County Sheriff runs on a traditional public safety platform focused on strict crime enforcement, addressing homelessness and border security. He is endorsed by Congressmen Darrell Issa and Ken Calvert, as well as the Assembly Republican Leader, Heath Flora and supported by law enforcement.



Chad Bianco

Republican Steve Hilton. The former Fox News Host and former policy advisor to the UK Prime Minister David Cameron advocates for a complete overhaul

of state government through deregulation, lower taxes and ending one-party control. He is supported by Vivek Ramaswamy, former Presidential candidate, running mate, Gloria Romero: Former Democratic State Senate Majority Leader. She is Hilton's official running mate for Lieutenant Governor, the late Charlie Kirk, and State Senator Tony Strickland.



Steve Hilton

Legislative Update

The deadline to introduce legislation in 2026 is Friday, February 20th and many more will come into print shortly thereafter. So far, several key bills of interest have been introduced, which are highlighted below. CalRHA is proactively working on legislation this year dealing with the 16-unit resident manager requirement, property left in common areas, trespass, habitability claim protections, and production streamlining.

AB 1611 (Haney) Taxation of Rental Properties and loss of 1031 Exchange Benefits for Owners of 50 or More Units.

This bill addresses how gains are taxed when exchanging properties. Under current law, gains or losses from exchanging similar properties for business or investment purposes are not recognized for tax purposes. However, the bill would change this by preventing the non-recognition of gains for taxpayers who exchange single-family residential rental properties if they own 50 or more such properties in California. The changes would apply to exchanges completed from January 1, 2026, aligning with taxable years starting on that date.



Matt Haney

AB 1768 (Bryan) Existing law allows local governments to levy a transactions and use tax for various purposes,

following specific procedures and limits, including a total tax rate cap of 2% per county. This bill would permit Los Angeles County to impose an additional tax of up to 0.5% under the Transactions and Use Tax Law until December 31, 2031, for



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general and special purposes, contingent on voter approval. This additional tax could surpass the typical 2% county cap.

AB 1771 (Alvarez) Current law mandates that a manager or responsible person must live on-site in any apartment building with 16 or more units. The bill seeks to remove this requirement, preventing state or local entities from mandating on-site residency for managers or caretakers. It also directs the department to update its regulations accordingly. The bill states that these changes are of statewide importance, meaning they apply to all cities, including those with their own charters. - **SUPPORT.**



David Alvarez

AB 1842 (Harabedian) This bill would allow borrowers to request forbearance if their property becomes uninhabitable due to an emergency, with the condition that borrowers must affirm the property's uninhabitable status. This bill requires mortgage servicers to provide an initial forbearance period of up to 180 days, extendable in 90-day increments up to 12 months total.



John Harabedian

AB 1963 (McKinnor) Unhabitability – Spot Bill

AB 2025 (Pellerin) Digitally Altered Images for Rental Property. The Real Estate Law regulates the licensing and activities of real estate brokers and salespersons. It mandates that if any digitally altered image is used in advertisements or promotional materials for selling real estate, a disclosure must be made, and an unaltered version of the image must be included if the content is online. A willful violation of this law is considered a crime. The bill extends these requirements to rented properties, meaning that similar disclosures and original images must be provided for rental property ads.



Tina McKinnor

SB 880 (Wahab) Housing Purchase Moratorium – Spot Bill

SB 885 (Strickland) Major and Emergency Regulations. The bill stipulates that a state agency cannot finalize a major regulation until it prepares the impact analysis, submits a proposal to the Legislature, and the Legislature enacts a law allowing the regulation. However, agencies can adopt emergency regulations if they follow specific requirements, with emergency regulations not exceeding 180 days, though they may be readopted twice for 90 days under certain conditions.



Tony Strickland

SB 1117 (Cervantes) Currently, impact fees cannot be charged on ADUs with 750 square feet or less of livable space. For ADUs larger than 750 square feet, fees must be proportional to the main dwelling's size. The bill proposes that fees for ADUs only apply to the area beyond 750 square feet. This bill would change how local agencies calculate these fees, creating a state-mandated local program, and asserts that these changes are of statewide concern, affecting all cities, including charter cities.

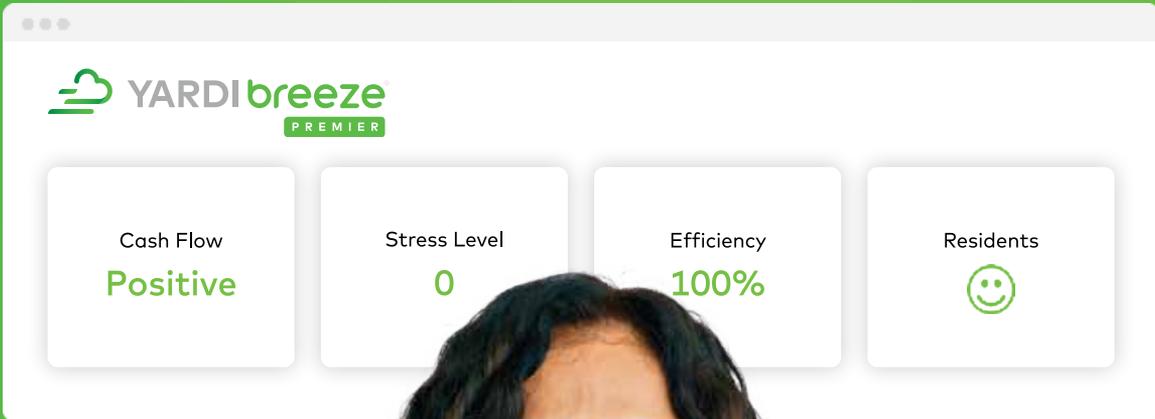


Sabrina Cervantes

After our bill introduction deadline of February 20th, we will have a fuller picture of all of the legislation that we will be facing this year. Below, please find the deadlines for the year.

2026 Legislative Deadlines

- February 20th–Bill Introduction Deadline
- March 26th–Spring Recess
- May 8th–Policy Committee Deadline
- May 15th–Fiscal Committee Deadline
- May 29th–Floor Deadline
- June 15th–Budget Bill Passage
- June 25th–Last Day for a Legislative Measure to Qualify for the November 3rd General Election Ballot
- July 2nd–Policy Committee Deadline in Second House and Start of Summer Recess
- August 3rd–Legislature Reconvenes from Summer Recess
- August 14th - Fiscal Committee Deadline in Second House
- August 31st - Floor Committee Deadline in Second House/End of Session
- September 30th - Last Day for Governor to Sign or Veto Legislation



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CalRHA 2/24/2026 Update: 2026 HOUSING LEGISLATION

Housing Production & Land Use: Building Standards & Zoning

- **AB 2057 (DeMaio) Building Standards: Natural Gas.** Prohibits local bans on natural gas in residences.
- **AB 1771 (Alvarez) State Housing Law: Apartment Houses.** Removes on-site manager requirement (16+ units).
- **AB 2656 (Petrie-Norris) Planning and Zoning Law.** Technical update concerning planning, transportation planning, zoning regulations, and housing development.
- **AB 2603 (Lowenthal) Dwellings: Untenantability.** Technical update concerning stairs.
- **AB 1963 (McKinnor) Dwellings: Untenantability.** Technical update concerning waterproofing and weather protection.

Tenant & Borrower Protections

- **AB 1842 (Harabedian) California Emergency Mortgage Relief Act.** Expands disaster mortgage forbearance (180-day initial period).
- **SB 1155 (Smallwood-Cuevas) Nonpayment of Rent: Federal Employees.** Eviction protections during federal shutdowns.
- **SB 1160 (Durazo) Judicial Council: Eviction Data Reporting.** Requires statewide eviction data reporting.

Rental Transparency & Process

- **AB 2025 (Pellerin) Tenancy: Digitally Altered Images.** Requires disclosure of altered rental listing images.
- **SB 1296 (Durazo) Real Property: Rentals: Pet Policy.** Requires clear pet policy disclosure in ads/applications.
- **SB 1335 (Strickland) Tenancy: Disposition of Personal Property.** Technical update to methods for handling personal property left behind after a tenant has ended their lease.
- **SB 1243 (Durazo) Unlawful Detainer: Tenancy.** Technical update of lease termination rules, involving an act of abuse or violence against the tenant or family member.

Tax & Revenue Measures

- **AB 1611 (Haney) Taxation: Capital Gains & SFR Rentals.** Ends capital gains deferral for owners with 50+ single-family rentals.
- **AB 2394 (Lee) Personal Income Tax: Real Property Exclusion.** Temporary capital gains exclusion for seniors (65+, 20+ year ownership).
- **SB 1053 (Niello) Property Tax: Disaster Relief Transfers.** Extends base-year value transfer window (+3 years).
- **AB 1768 (Bryan) Transactions & Use Tax: Los Angeles County.** Authorizes additional 0.5% sales tax (voter approval).

Tenant & Borrower Protection

- **AB 1924 (Gabriel) Homelessness Prevention Strategy.** Signals creation of statewide prevention framework.
- **SB 1091 (Caballero) Community Anti-Displacement & Preservation Program.** Creates acquisition/rehab financing program.
- **SB 880 (Wahab) Housing Purchases: Moratorium (Intent Bill).** Signals potential temporary housing purchase restrictions.
- **SB 885 (Strickland) Major Regulations.** Requires legislative approval for major regulations (\$50M+ impact).




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santa barbara rental property association

Business Partner Directory

Welcome to SBRPA's Business Partner Directory, a special group created for our Vendors & Suppliers. Join to get a free listing in the Business Partner Directory on the SBRPA website with your logo and a link to your own profile page. That page can link to your own website, and you can submit an overview of your company, a photo of your contact person, LinkedIn/Facebook URLs and Twitter/Instagram handles to be included on your page. We encourage our Business Partners to submit articles of interest to masgazine@sbrpa.org. For more information about the program, please contact our Chairperson, Lori Zahn at Lori@LoriZahn.com or 805.451.2712.



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An Exit Strategy for Owners of Investment Property

1031 Exchange & Delaware Statutory Trust (DST) Advisors



Aimpoint Investments specializes in helping owners understand **1031 Like-Kind Exchanges** and **Delaware Statutory Trust (DST)** investments. We offer property owners burdened by tenants, maintenance, and regulations a structured way to step away from active management while maintaining exposure to institutional-quality real estate.

Many rental property owners have spent years dealing with tenants, toilets, trash, and navigating an increasingly complex regulatory environment. Rising operating costs and the demands of hands-on management are prompting owners to explore alternative real estate investment options. We take an educational approach to help owners understand how exchanging away from direct ownership may align with their long-term financial, estate planning, and lifestyle goals.

Our mission is to provide clarity on how DST investments differ from traditional property ownership. **Aimpoint Investments** works collaboratively with your existing advisors (CPA, attorney, and real estate professionals) to promote informed decision-making. We do not provide tax or legal advice, but serve as a resource to help owners better understand their options and ask the right questions.

If you are exploring a sale, exchange, or retiring from management responsibilities, **Aimpoint Investments** can help evaluate options that may align with your goals.

What is a 1031 exchange?

A 1031 exchange allows an investment or business-use property to be sold and replaced with another qualifying property while deferring capital gains taxes. The transaction must follow IRS rules and timelines, and funds must remain with a qualified intermediary during the exchange period. The result is a continuity of investment rather than cashing out of real estate.

What qualifies as like-kind property?

For real estate, like-kind is broadly defined. An apartment building can be exchanged for commercial, industrial, or fractional ownership interests in qualifying structures. The replacement property must be held for investment or business use rather than personal occupancy. The focus is on investment intent rather than identical property-type. Additionally, exchangers are allowed to sell a property located in one state and purchase a replacement property in another. This may appeal to owners seeking a shift to markets with higher income potential.

What is a Delaware Statutory Trust (DST)?

A DST is a legal ownership structure that allows multiple investors to hold fractional interests in institutional-quality real estate. Professional asset managers, called Sponsors, handle leasing, financing, and operations. Investors receive proportional income and potential appreciation while the Sponsor manages the day-to-day and asset management responsibilities.

Are DSTs considered like-kind for 1031 exchanges?

IRS guidance recognizes DST interests as qualifying replacement property under a Revenue Ruling issued in 2004. If the DST is structured properly and in accordance with the ruling, the purchase of beneficial interests qualifies as replacement property under Section 1031. This enables investors to transition from active property management into a passive ownership structure. Aimpoint Investments helps navigate the challenging environment of DST investments and Sponsors to promote informed decision-making.

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About the Founder



Trevor Flor, MBA, MSRE
President & Investment Consultant

Trevor Flor is a Santa Barbara-based 1031 Exchange and DST Investment Advisor. A UCSB grad and former Navy F-18 pilot, Trevor has over 20 years of experience in real estate finance, underwriting and securities. Trevor believes in an education-first approach to real estate investing, and focuses on providing clarity and disciplined analysis for owners evaluating real estate decisions. He holds an MBA and a Master's Degree in Real Estate. Trevor lives in Santa Barbara with his wife Mika, and together they enjoy recreational flying, traveling to Asia and Europe, sailing, hiking and trying all the great restaurants in town.

Contact us today at www.aimpointinvest.com or 805-708-3951.

Some examples of the institutional property-types available to investors in a DST (Delaware Statutory Trust) include:



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National Apartment Association



Advocate 2026

March 24-25, 2026 | Washington D.C.

Advocate – NAA's annual advocacy conference – is the prime opportunity to meet with your representatives by joining rental housing suppliers, property managers, owners and operators in Washington, D.C.

Advocate 2026 will be March 24-25, 2026, with NAA Governance meetings continuing March 26-27, 2026.

Registration

Pre-registration for Advocate is complimentary for all attendees who register on or before March 17, 2026. After this date, registration must be done on-site and will be subject to a \$50 charge.

Please Note: Congressional offices may restrict the number of people allowed to participate in meetings on Capitol Hill during Lobby Day. Registering for Advocate does not guarantee that you will be able to participate in a meeting. Please make sure you are working with your local affiliate if you are planning to attend a meeting.

Questions? Contact meetings@naahq.org or call 833-86-MYNAA

Schedule

A detailed schedule of sessions and locations for Tuesday, March 24 through Friday, March 28 is available on the NAA website.

Experience

NAA members will be asking their Members of Congress to pass these bills during the Advocate Conference on March 25:

- **SB470/H.R. 1078 RESPECT State Housing Laws Act.**
This bicameral, bipartisan bill finally sunsets the 30-day required Notice to Vacate (NTV) requirement put in place as part of the CARES Act during the COVID pandemic.
- **SB 2651 ROAD to Housing Act & H.R. 6644 Housing for the 21st Century Act.**
These two pieces of legislation are each congressional chamber's comprehensive housing packages. While different, both housing packages are bipartisan and broad-based.

Travel

Hotel: Grand Hyatt Washington. Other options: Marriott Metro or Capital Hilton, both in Washington DC.

If you are an NAA Board Member, please contact *Leanne Shroeder* to receive the direct housing link for the NAA Board of Director block of rooms.



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Rental Owner Updates

NEVER HURTS TO ASK

One of the landlords who just recently joined us on our recent Landlord Retreat shared a couple of landlording money saving tips on our Q&A Forum.

I have a GIANT MONSTER of a tree, gnarly and rotten, with a HUGE colony of bees inside it. From 20 feet away you can hear the hum of the hive and see hundreds of bees buzzing around. The tree looks like it could fall and crush the garage with a gentle puff of wind.

On advice of a beekeeper friend we waited for super cold temps so the bees would be dormant inside the trunk before disturbing the tree.

The original quote was \$4,500. My tree guy texted and asked if we were ready to cut it down. He needs work for his crew. I said, "Gee, that's a lot of money. Any chance you could give me a winter deal?"

The price dropped to \$1,700. Done.

Bonus Tip: I always pay him THE MINUTE the trees are gone so he knows I'm a good source of money to keep his crew paid."

- Brad, IN

What kind of bees? If they are honey bees you can easily find someone to come get the queen and rehome the colony.

For me, I do not appreciate a person that gives me a high end price and drops it like that. Especially if it is a person that I do a lot of business with.

- Zero, IN

I totally understand seasonal pricing. It's common at the beach, although it's often higher in the winter when everyone is busy and lower in summer when they are begging for work because all the big houses are full of tourists and no work can be done on them.

I don't mind the concept: it's simple supply and demand.

- WMH, NC

When you've got payroll to meet you've gotta do what you've gotta do. Otherwise when spring rolls around your crew may have found another company to go work for.

- Cynthia, TN



I had an internal wall of an apartment building full of bee's with combs of honey. My bee keeper wanted to re-locate the bees to his land. Bee's are in short supply. Then he could farm them out for a fee. Upon investigation, he could charge farmers a small fortune to pollinate their fields. Thousands of dollars. It would take him two days to remove all of my bee's.

The original price to remove the bee's was \$1500. Then it dropped to \$1,200. And on the day he came to remove them, the price went up. I found out why. The City was going to charge he a fee to relocate the bee's. \$1,800. They wanted a piece of the pie.

So then wanted to screw me over in a time bee's were dying and crops were at risk. The bee keeper wasn't happy making \$5,000 a month farming out these bees. And the City wasn't going to let anything happen without their \$1,800.

So I injected into the hallow walls bee killing foam. No one got nothing, except I got satisfaction. \$100 of bee foam. Against their greed.

- Robert J, CA

NEVER INCLUDE UTILITIES

Just had a would be applicant ask "would you consider including all utilities if the rent was increased?"

#1 red flag: this would be applicant probably can't get a utility account bc of non payment/ arrears

#2 red flag: if another eviction moratorium goes into place (think winter eviction moratorium) you're completely HOSED.

Nope.

- Mapleleaf 18, NY

Had a S8 peep rotate the gas bill to each child's SSN. Running up the gas until it was shut off rinse repeat. She ran out of SSNs to use. Asked me to include utilitiesNO THANKYOU.

- Tryan, MA

Continued on page 29



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That would have to be a heck of a rent increase. My own water bill last summer was over \$250 a month and even now the electric bill is running over \$150, and I have gas heat, gas, stove, gas hot water, gas dryer.

I'm really careful with utilities. A tenant wouldn't be careful with utilities if they didn't have to pay for any of it and it doesn't take much to run up huge utility bills.

I just tell applicants that is it their chance to save money. If I include utilities I would have to charge enough rent to cover the highest possible amount and they can be careful and thrifty with their usage and save some money because they have control over what they are spending.

- Oregon Woodsmoke, ID

I really like the ones that say "but the heat is FREE" (this is when I told them they have to close their windows, take the AC out of the window and STOP increasing the thermostat).

To be "fair" - at the time we JUST took over the building, there is only one furnace and the previous LL/ "PM" unlocked all of the thermostats.

When we got them out (two of these people, finally) their thermostats were set at 80 ... yup... 80.

The new owner wanted to know why his bill for the heating was over \$2400 a month ... ummm ... this is why! I'm sure it would have been more this year/ last year if we didn't get them out.

I literally just spoke to one (newly placed) tenant and asked her what she would like to have her heat set at and she said "80" ... I looked at her and said "NO". She then said "75?".

Nope... I guess you get 68 and we'll see from there.
- Jonny, NY

I have a duplex I still pay heat on. Having trouble getting a quote that makes it worthwhile to split it, though. All the quotes I've gotten would take 20+ years to make my money back, which is too long.

- Mat, PA

I don't include utilities but I told my renters I'd pay half their water bills as compensation for drizzling the taps during this past freezing weather here.

- Pmh, TX



Unpaid utilities and unpaid rent go hand in hand together where more likely in the never ending cycle of rent arrears and completely trashing out rental units.

When a utility belongs to tenant they use carefully like not leaving lights on and turning down heat when not there.

I remember when I converted a 15 rental building to individual hydro-electric meters where one cold night standing outside then could see the building and building next door where windows open and lights on. Some tenants object the rent reduction where eventually evicted them.

Once the 700 and above credit is crossed all the drama and damages end. If the tenant cannot sign up as they owe utilities a lot of money so they can walk. . .

- Robert, ON Canada

I include this clause in my lease.

Landlord will allow applicant/tenant to transfer utilities into their name before the "Start of the Lease, AKA as Tenancy". Landlord has a standing order to "Stop All Utilities" before the end of the "Month".

By putting the said utilities into their names before landlord termination, the tenant will pay a minimal transfer fee, instead of a "Re-start" fee".

- Robert J, CA

I would prefer NOT to but on a 4 plex it is too costly to get separate water meters.

Thus it is another line item on their invoice. I approx it by 4 and how many ppl are in the unit. It works fairly well.

Not perfect by any means but yes. . . On a single unit, no way jose!

- Lucy, IN

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Santa Barbara Happenings



Terry A. Bartlett – Reetz, Fox & Bartlett LLP

Goleta Housing Project Moves Forward with 56 Unit Development.

The Shelby Residential Development Project is a housing project located at 7400 Cathedral Oaks Road. It proposes adding 56 total single-family homes, 11 of which will be dedicated as affordable housing units. The units would range from single- or two-story homes and would include a private street maintained by the residents. Homes are also projected to include porches and yards.

This project has been in the approval process for over twenty years. Around three years ago, the Shelby Family Partnership sued the City of Goleta for failing to process their application. Following the lawsuit, Judge Anderle required the city to process the application.

UCSB Housing Project in Isla Vista Approved by Coastal Commission.

Graduate students, researchers, and postdocs of the Kavli Institute of Theoretical Physics are one step closer to receiving housing next to the Friendship Manor of Isla Vista. The plan looks like it will be to add 33 units, 33 parking spaces, and 60 bicycle spaces. After the Coastal Commission's approval, construction is expected to begin later in 2026 and be finished by summer 2027.

More Housing Coming to De La Guerra St. of Santa Barbara.

After the Architectural Board of Review granted the final approval for the 102 W. De La Guerra St. project, construction is set to begin soon. The five-story project will provide 44 housing units and 77 parking spaces. The architecture is a point of contention, along with the overall size of the project and size of the rooms. It is not family friendly. Next to the housing complex, a self-storage facility will also be built. The facility will be a four-story tall building with the addition of a basement.

Image: courtesy rendering, edhat.com

California Gas Prices Keep Rising. Does Our Government Care?

The average gas price in California continues to climb, reaching \$4.58. In just two weeks, the price has risen by \$0.40. This is an incredible gap when compared to the national average, sitting at \$2.96

per gallon. California has seen multiple refineries close, leaving only six operating refineries in the state. This, combined with the fact that California



has begun importing gasoline from the Bahamas at a higher rate than ever, means the continued increase in gasoline price per gallon is no shocker.

Let's Make More Families Homeowners. New Downpayment Loans Available.

After receiving \$5.3 million in new funding, the Housing Trust Fund of Santa Barbara has pledged to expand two programs focused on down payment loans. The funds will be used to assist first-time home buyers in securing their down-payments. It aims to help low- and middle-income individuals become homeowners. With the median price of homes in Santa Barbara reaching \$1,186,500, applicants would be eligible for 10-year-interest-only loan up to \$125,000.

White House Puts Single Family Homeowners First.

President Trump issued an executive order prioritizing single family homes and opening paths to homeownership. In other words, the act is aiming to block Wall Street or institutional investment. The order will:

- Restrict the federal government's role in certain sales of single-family homes;
- Combat speculation in single-family housing by large institutional investors; and
- Spearhead legislation that codifies the policy objectives within the order.

The order does not specifically apply to multifamily homes.

Merit Based Teacher Rewards Increasing in Implementation. Let's Try it Here.

In 2016, in an effort to increase math and reading scores, the Dallas Independent School District Accelerating Campus Excellence Program was introduced.. In the district, teacher salary ranges from

Continued on page 35

2026 Advertising Rates

The magazine is published 11 times per year. Monthly except for our Fall issue (Aug-Sep). Ads are generally due around the 15th of the month for the following month's magazine. 2026 rates are listed below. Questions e-mail magazine@sbrpa.org.

Ad size	SBRPA Member/ Business Partner		
	Annual	Quarterly	Monthly
Full page	\$1,980.00	\$534.60	\$198.00
3/4 page	\$1,485.00	\$400.95	\$148.50
1/2 page	\$990.00	\$267.30	\$99.00
1/4 page	\$495.00	\$133.65	\$49.50
Business card	\$330.00	\$89.10	\$33.00

Ad size	Standard Advertiser Rates		
	Annual	Quarterly	Monthly
Full page	\$2,070.00	\$558.90	\$207.00
3/4 page	\$1,550.00	\$418.50	\$155.00
1/2 page	\$1,035.00	\$279.45	\$103.50
1/4 page	\$515.00	\$139.05	\$51.50
Business card	\$345.00	\$93.15	\$34.50



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Santa Barbara Happenings from page 33

\$64,000 to \$101,000. Teachers are evaluated every year, and their salary is incentivized to increase or decrease based on the performance of their students.

Since this program's induction, 809 districts have joined the program. Teacher bonuses range from \$2,000 to \$25,000, with 93% of teachers being considered "highly effective". Within this program, teacher retention has increased, teacher salary has increased, and most importantly, student test scores have increased.

Nation Wide Rent Costs for Apartments Decrease for the Sixth Consecutive Month.

Since peaking in mid-2022, the national median monthly rent has decreased by 6.2%. Since last year, it has decreased by 1.4%. Month over month, the national median monthly rent is decreasing by 0.2%, currently at \$1,353 as a national average. While 2026 is expected to see less new homes being built, units have been vacant and available for a peak of 41 days.

Planned 72-Room Hotel Harmony in Carpinteria Received Final Approval.

The Carpinteria Architectural Review Board approved the Hotel Harmony, a 72-room, two-story project at 4100 Via Real. It will also include a garden patio, an exercise room, a breakfast area, a business center, meeting room, and other utility rooms. The project was reduced from three stories to two and the proposed swimming pool was abandoned due to costs.

The project will require multiple existing structures to be torn down, including a church, sheds, and a children's play area.

Santa Barbara County Government Spending is Out of Control

Santa Barbara County has pledged to raise taxes on hotels and motels and even implement a transfer tax. So, forget about decreasing housing costs? It is also considering increasing the county sales tax as well. Where is all this money going? Not where you think.

From 2000 to today, the population has increased by about 10%. For any reasonable, modest county, the county budget should increase at a similar rate. The budget, during that same period, increased 355.69%, peaking at nearly \$1.7 billion. At the same time, salary, benefits, and pensions for county employees doubled to \$177,000. Construction fees, such as the fees these companies must pay for affecting traffic, have also doubled. While that money could be used for better infrastructure, it is going to county officers instead.

Think about this the next time you vote. As usual, the taxpayers are at the bottom of the government priority list.

Rent Freeze in Santa Barbara Approved by City Council.

The temporary rent freeze was approved by the Santa Barbara City Council in a 4-3 vote. This means that a unit's base rent cannot be increased until December 2026. However, this rent freeze does not apply to government and housing authority units. The council is proposing public reviews to help draft a more permanent rent cap ordinance. If approved in July, the next generation rent cap would go into effect starting January 2027. There are some exemptions.

Mayor Randy Rowse voted against the ordinance, arguing that it is a lazy top-down approach rather than a more sincere, rooted problem-solving solution.

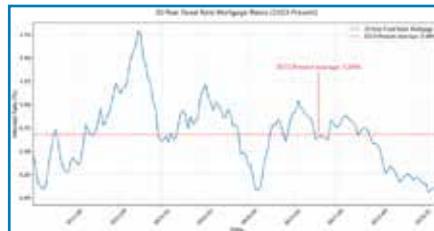
New Rule Prevents Illegal Immigrants from Accessing Section 8 Housing.

The Secretary of Housing and Community Development has announced a prohibition on financially assisting any persons other than United States Citizens or specific categories of eligible noncitizens in HUD's public and specified assisted housing programs. This will require verification of an individual's U.S. citizenship or eligible immigrant status. This action closes a long loophole which has allowed illegal immigrants to gain access to public housing assistance meant for low income US citizens.

U.S. Mortgage Rate Reaches Lowest Level in Three Years.

The U.S. mortgage rate has fallen recently to the lowest level in over three years. However, it remains around the same 6% range that it has been in 2026.

The mortgage rate is 6.01%, compared to 6.85% one year prior. Borrowing costs on 15-year fixed-rate mortgages fell to 5.35%, from 6.04% one year ago.



Graph: TheMortgageReports.com

Terry A. Bartlett is a real estate, housing, commercial leasing, and landlord attorney at Reetz, Fox & Bartlett LLP in Santa Barbara.

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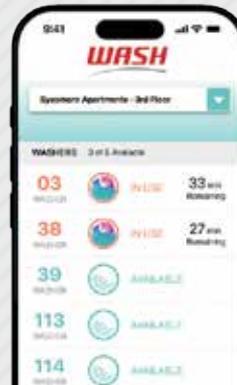


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