

MOTION BY SUPERVISORS SHEILA KUEHL AND
HILDA L. SOLIS

October 2, 2018

Support Prop 10: Repealing of the Costa Hawkins Rental Housing Act Ballot Initiative

Los Angeles County is experiencing a severe housing crisis. The effect of rising rents, coupled with stagnant incomes, has drastically increased the number of “rent-burdened” and “severely rent-burdened” households in our County —those who spend more than 30% and 50% of their income on rent. Severe rent burden is currently the leading cause of homelessness. Zillow Research reported that, if rents climb an average of 5 percent, 2,000 more individuals will fall into homelessness. Zillow also found that the relationship between rising rents and increases in homelessness was particularly strong in Los Angeles.

The Costa Hawkins Rental Housing Act is a state statute enacted in 1995 that limits the ability of local jurisdictions to implement rent stabilization policies. Specifically, the law prohibits cities from enacting rent limitation policies on single-family homes and condos, enables landlords to raise rents to market rate once a unit is vacated (also known as vacancy decontrol), and limits implementation to units constructed either before February 1995 or at the date set by city’s existing rent stabilization policies. In the City of Los Angeles, Costa Hawkins limits rent stabilization to units built before

MOTION

SOLIS _____

RIDLEY-THOMAS _____

HAHN _____

BARGER _____

KUEHL _____

October of 1978.

The inability to afford housing harms renters, their families, and the regional economy. In Los Angeles County, rents are continuing to rise as the stock of affordable and available housing diminishes. On September 11, 2018, the Board of Supervisors (Board) took monumental strides to protect tenants from unreasonable rent increases in unincorporated Los Angeles County by directing County Counsel to draft an interim ordinance which temporarily limits rent increases. However, much of the housing stock throughout the County is comprised of both single-family homes and units built after the date allowable by Costa Hawkins, which has the effect of excluding a significant number of tenants from rental protections.

Proposition 10 will repeal the Costa Hawkins Rental Housing Act, thereby allowing local jurisdictions throughout California the flexibility to preserve existing tenancies by creating reasonable rent stabilization policies that make the most sense for their communities in addressing their housing affordability crisis.

WE, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors take an official position in support of Proposition 10, which would give local governments throughout the State the ability to create reasonable protections for renters in their jurisdictions.

S:MR/Support Prop 10: Repealing of the Costa Hawkins Rental Housing Act Ballot Initiative