

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR HOLLY J. MITCHELL

April 9, 2024

Increasing Housing Accessibility by Providing Protections for Tenants with Permanent Disabilities

In 1995, the California State Legislature passed the Costa–Hawkins Rental Housing (Costa-Hawkins) Act, which placed specific limits on local municipalities’ ability to enact rent control. A key provision of the Costa–Hawkins Act is vacancy decontrol, which allows residential property owners in jurisdictions with rent control policies to reset rental rates to market value after a tenant has moved out of the unit. The County of Los Angeles (County) currently provides rent control tenant protections authorized by the Costa–Hawkins Act under County Code Chapter 8.52, Rent Stabilization and Tenant Protections.

On October 11, 2023, Governor Gavin Newsom signed Assemblymember Zbur’s Assembly Bill (AB) 1620 into law. AB 1620 amends the Costa-Hawkins Act by authorizing local jurisdictions to require owners of residential properties that are subject to local rent control to permit a tenant who has a permanent disability to move to a comparable unit at the same rental rate, increasing accessibility for individuals with mobility-related disabilities. Tenants with disabilities in rent-controlled units are often forced to stay in a unit that continues to impact their mobility or move into another unit that will likely be rented out at a higher rental rate. A National Disability Institute report found that households with an individual with a disability would require, on average, 28 percent more income to achieve the same standard of living as a household without a disabled

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member¹. As a result, moving into a more expensive unit can financially burden an individual with a mobility-related disability in addition to the disability-specific needs and related costs they already bear.

Local implementation of AB 1620 is an important step for the County to take to support residents with disabilities, ensuring that those who are most vulnerable are given the opportunity to thrive without the threat of housing insecurity. Access to housing is one of the key indicators that an individuals' basic health and safety needs are being met. Updating the County Code Chapter 8.52, Rent Stabilization and Tenant Protections ordinance to implement AB 1620 in the unincorporated areas of the County would increase accessibility and the preservation of affordable housing for disabled and senior tenants throughout the region. Individuals with disabilities have historically faced challenges securing affordable and accessible housing and the County must continue to work to be a place where all people have access to dignified housing options that meet their needs.

I THEREFORE MOVE THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:

1. Direct the Director of Consumer and Business Affairs (DCBA), in consultation with County Counsel, to return to the Board in 120 days with an ordinance amending Los Angeles County Code Chapter 8.52, Rent Stabilization and Tenant Protections, to require owners of residential real property to permit tenants in fully covered rental units, who are not subject to eviction for nonpayment of rent and who have a permanent physical disability related to mobility, to move to an available comparable or smaller fully covered rental unit on an accessible floor of the property if certain conditions are met, in accordance with Assembly Bill 1620.
2. Direct DCBA, in consultation with County Counsel and other relevant departments, to report back to the Board in writing in 120 days with recommendations to implement the amended ordinance including operational impacts, enforcement, remedies, funding and staffing needs, and timeline.

¹ <https://statics.teams.cdn.office.net/evergreen-assets/safelinks/1/atp-safelinks.html>

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3. Delegate authority to the Director of DCBA to engage consultants, as needed, to carry out the directives of this motion.
4. Direct the Director of the Aging and Disabilities Department, in partnership with the Director of DCBA, to share information with their clients about tenant and property owner protections and responsibilities.

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(BW/PL/IG)