

Marina del Rey
Lessees Association

C/o Mr. Timothy C. Riley, Executive Director
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March 22, 2021

Ms. Allison Clark
Economic Development and Affordable Housing Division
Chief Executive Office, County of Los Angeles
Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

RE: Eviction Moratorium Stakeholder Group

Dear Ms. Clark:

The Marina del Rey Lessees Association represents the leaseholders of the County-owned parcels in unincorporated Marina del Rey, including the luxury residential properties that are occupied by high-income “renters by choice” who are not in danger of homelessness and do not qualify for the County’s rent relief assistance programs.

The purpose of the County’s Eviction Moratorium is to offer protection to low-income tenants that are rent-burdened and threatened with displacement, a set of circumstances that do not apply to high-income tenants. State law, as enacted by SB 91, deems households earning less than 80 percent of the Area Medium Income are eligible for rental assistance according to certain criteria. Most residents in Marina del Rey enjoy incomes which do not fall below this income threshold.

The County requires tenant financial information to determine eligibility for rental assistance. However, the County’s lessees in Marina del Rey are not allowed to collect financial information, and as a result, only a very small number of our residents are applying for, and being awarded, rent relief assistance. Most lessees are finding that over eight percent of their residents are deferring rent, at a time when vacancies are also increasing and rents are lower than before the pandemic.

Reasonable lease provisions, including, for example, a typical prohibition against unpermitted and unregistered short-term rentals, are being ignored, and management has no practical recourse to make any demands that unscrupulous tenants cease-and-desist such forbidden activities or establish a fair and reasonable repayment plan. The amount of deferred rent—and the prospect of nonpayment—is growing by an alarming amount each and every month.


The Association had been notified by the CEO's office of the Eviction Moratorium Stakeholder meeting scheduled for March 25, 2021, which is geared to tenant protections and the Agenda does not apparently include consideration of the concerns of the property owners. We have since learned that a separate meeting for property owners and landlords took place in February, of which we had not been made aware. Our understanding of that February meeting is that a dialogue did not take place with property owners, landlords and their organizations, and that the presentation from County staff was only informational.

We hope the CEO office will hold a meeting with the property owners and their advocacy groups in order to solicit their concerns and obtain feedback from us regarding the financial challenges facing the rental housing market. The Lessees Association, for example, is anxious to work with the CEO's office to develop a plan whereby the County assists the Marina lessees in the collection of the deferred rent of high-income residents now that the moratorium has now entered into its second year.

The County must address a rational solution to the implementation of fair and targeted rent relief assistance programs so that high-income "renters by choice" living in luxury apartments cannot simply ignore their contractual obligations to pay rent on an ongoing basis, but also to repay rent during a reasonable repayment period. The Eviction Moratorium Stakeholder meeting must produce results in a balanced and measured approach that address the needs of property owners as well as those of rent-burdened tenants.

The Association appreciates the consideration of our concerns for a fair and equitable solution relative to the uniqueness of Marina del Rey's housing.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "David O. Levine" followed by a stylized flourish.

David O. Levine, President

cc: Joe Nicchitta, Chief Executive Office
Jayme Wilson, Deputy, Office of Supervisor Janice Hahn
Gary Jones, Director, Department of Beaches and Harbors
Amy Caves, Deputy Director, Department of Beaches and Harbors
Dana Pratt, Department of Consumer and Business Affairs