



January 12, 2021

The Honorable David Chiu
California State Assembly
State Capitol, P.O. Box 942849
Sacramento, CA 94249-0017

RE: AB 15 (Chiu) – Tenant Stabilization Act of 2021 – SUPPORT

Dear Assemblymember Chiu,

East Bay Housing Organizations (EBHO) is pleased to support AB 15, which both extends and improves upon the emergency tenant protections of AB 3088 to ensure that struggling tenants remain housed during the latest—and most dangerous—surge in the COVID-19 pandemic.

EBHO is a non-profit, member-driven organization with over 500 organizational and individual members. For 35 years, we have worked to preserve, protect, and create affordable housing opportunities for low-income communities in the East Bay by educating, advocating, organizing, and building coalitions. We believe that solutions to California's severe housing crisis must be comprehensive. As such, we support a multi-pronged effort based on the three principles of production of new housing, preservation of existing housing that is affordable, and protection of residents from unaffordable rent increases, eviction, displacement, and homelessness.

AB 3088 has been a lifeline for tenants who are struggling to pay their rent due to the economic hardships caused by COVID-19 and the much-needed public health measures taken in response. In areas without a local eviction moratorium, AB 3088 is the only thing standing between low-income tenants and homelessness. Eviction always represents a deeply traumatic and harmful event for an individual or family. As the CDC has noted, however, the epidemiological threat of eviction is not limited to those that experience it directly; rather, eviction puts all of us at risk as it forces people to move into crowded or unsanitary shelter, thus increasing community spread of the virus. Nevertheless, without immediate action, AB 3088 will expire at the end of January, putting countless families and communities across the state at risk of increased disruption and infection at a time when transmission rates in California are among the worst in the U.S.

AB 15 provides a path to avoid this catastrophe. It would extend the eviction moratorium for tenants impacted by COVID-19 until December 31st, 2021. It would also give tenants until that time to pay at least 25% of the rent owed since September 1st, 2020. This is crucial because it

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will not only give tenants more time to find work, but also give state and local agencies more time to distribute the estimated \$2.6 billion in emergency rental assistance issued to California in the most recent stimulus bill. Providing adequate time for the roll-out of rental assistance will ensure long-term housing stability for tenants, while also providing long-overdue financial relief for small landlords and non-profit affordable housing providers, who have experienced distress due to widespread non-payment of rent.

In addition, AB 15 would make improvements to the current moratorium by prohibiting late fees and negative credit reporting. And it would make it so that communities with moratoria that are more protective of tenants, like Oakland and Alameda County, could give residents more time to repay their back-owed rent.

We thank you for introducing this bill and look forward to working to secure its passage.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jeffrey Levin".

Jeffrey Levin
Policy Director