



September 10th, 2021

Governor Gavin Newsom
1303 10th Street, Suite 1173
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Request for Signature – AB 1487 (Gabriel) Tenant Protection and Homelessness Prevention Act - SUPPORT

Dear Governor Newsom:

East Bay Housing Organizations (EBHO) writes to express our appreciation for your leadership this year in supporting the vulnerable renters our organization represents. We stand in strong support of AB 1487 (Gabriel), which would create a Homelessness Prevention Fund at the state level, and we respectfully urge your signature of this critical bill. Creating a central fund for eviction prevention efforts, which include a continuum of outreach and education, early interventions, and legal assistance for vulnerable tenants, is central to the success of the state's current efforts to prevent a wave of evictions on the heels of the pandemic. We all have an interest in preventing the increased homelessness which would surely result from such a wave and the challenges this would pose to our state's recovery.

EBHO is a non-profit, member-driven organization with over 300 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.

The eviction prevention services prioritized under AB 1487 are a key component to achieving an equitable recovery, addressing our ongoing housing challenges, and increasing equity across California's diverse communities. By recognizing that evictions begin when issues arise between tenants and landlords, the bill can prevent avoidable evictions from ever being filed by ensuring renters and landlords are properly informed of, and able to comply with, their rights and obligations. This is especially important at a time when newly enacted eviction protections under AB 832, which in many instances will flow from the status of rental assistance applications, will be tested in the courts for the first time. Because AB 1487 prioritizes partnerships between legal services providers, community-based outreach organizations and local governments, it creates the ability to ensure tenants and landlords are aware of the available assistance, can troubleshoot issues with applications as they arise, and can ensure that eviction protections which flow from the status of those applications are properly asserted and enforced in court.



East Bay Housing Organizations

Preventing a wave of evictions has never been more important to our state's well-being. Data show the pandemic's housing impacts have been borne disproportionately by families and communities of color, who also have evictions filed against them at disproportionate rates. Ensuring our state is armed with the infrastructure and resources necessary to prevent evictions where possible and increasing access to justice by providing legal assistance where necessary, is critical to counteracting this imbalance and advancing racial justice. Community-based organizations who are assisting vulnerable tenants to apply for and receive rental assistance under the state's current program have witnessed a wide range of access issues, particularly for those in rural areas, those who lack access to technology, and those with unique language access needs. AB 1487 embraces outreach to such populations as a key part of our efforts to prevent eviction, displacement, and homelessness. At a time when our recovery is inextricably linked to our state's eviction protections and rental assistance program, this bill would ensure we have the tools we need to make that recovery a reality.

For these reasons, we urge you to sign AB 1487 and thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Levin
Policy Director