

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **BERKELEY RALLY FOR HOUSING JUSTICE NOW**

**Longtime residents of a small apartment building in North Berkeley facing Ellis Act evictions gather alongside community members and supporters to urge the City of Berkeley to protect residents against extractive investments and promote community ownership of housing.**

**(Berkeley, CA – November 22, 2019)** - Today, members of diverse housing justice organizations, including the [Alliance of Californians for Community Empowerment \(ACCE\) Action](#), [East Bay Housing Organizations \(EBHO\)](#), the [Bay Area Community Land Trust \(BACLt\)](#), and [Berkeley Tenants Union \(BTU\)](#), together with residents across Berkeley and unhoused advocates, will rally with tenants facing involuntary displacement at 1685 Solano Avenue. Those gathered call for the city to enact protections against eviction loopholes and extractive corporate investments, and to enact a program of community control and ownership to fight the onslaught of corporate speculation.

Who deserves to have a home in Berkeley? Who makes these decisions? In the midst of the housing crisis, corporations and speculators are buying up houses and apartments all over the city. Meanwhile, our unhoused neighbors across the whole region suffer from police harassment, seizures, and criminalization.

Last night thousands of East Bay residents slept on the street, in vehicles, and in overcrowded conditions because for decades the leaders of this region have prioritized market rate developers and landlords over the urgent need to protect and preserve affordability for everyday people. Enough is enough! We rally to:

- Stand against the displacement of tenants on Solano Avenue
- Close the TIC loopholes on condo conversion
- Fight for community control of land and housing in Berkeley
- Demand and end to the criminalization of unhoused people

“We’re ready to help these residents take control of their own housing,” said Rick Lewis, executive director of the Bay Area Community Land Trust. “These residents are working so hard to stay in Berkeley. After a long struggle against their eviction, purchasing their own building looks like their only way to stay in place. We need the owners to come to the table.”

“We have a housing emergency. In a time of such housing crisis, it’s totally absurd to have a law on the books like the Ellis Act, which allows landlords to empty their buildings and let their units sit vacant,” said Julia Cato, Chair of the Berkeley Tenants Union.

**WHAT:** Berkeley Rally for Housing Justice NOW

**WHERE:** 1685 Solano Avenue, Berkeley CA

**WHEN:** November 22nd, 2019

- 5:00 pm - Gather
- 5:30 pm - Rally Program begins
- 6:00-7:00 pm - Mingling, singing, chanting, community building

**WHO:** Alliance of Californians for Community Empowerment (ACCE Action), Berkeley Tenants Union (BTU), the Bay Area Community Land Trust (BACLt), East Bay Gray Panthers, Friends of Adeline, East Bay Housing Organizations (EBHO)

**FACEBOOK:** @BerkeleyTenants, @CalOrganize, @Eastbayhousingorganizations,

**TWITTER:** @BerkeleyTenants, @EBHO\_Housing, @CalOrganize

**VISUALS:** Crowd gathering outside the affected apartment building, banners, lights, drums, singers, speakers on the mic, protest signs

#OurCityNotScarcity, #HousingJusticeNOW, #CommunityControl