

Coastside Democrats

A Letter to the City of Pacifica Community,

The Coastside Democrats Board unanimously endorses Pacifica's Community Preservation, Rent Stabilization and Renters' Rights Act, aka Measure C, and encourages all Pacificans to register to vote in November and support this act. We applaud the majority members of the Pacifica City Council, Keener, Digre and Martin, for taking a lead on this issue and encourage other communities to do their part in solving a dire regional issue.

An analysis of Measure C reveals a balanced approach to one phase of solving the skyrocketing rents that we are experiencing here in the Bay Area. Under this measure, both renters and property owners are provided for in a fair and equitable manner in three general areas.

First, by providing for "stabilization" of rents, limiting rent increases to 2% to 5% per year depending on the Bay Area Consumer Price Index, will make rents predictable and manageable for residents in our communities. Landlords are given ample opportunity to bring rents up to market value when their units go back on the market.

Next, Measure C includes Just Cause for eviction protection. Just Cause protects renters from being pushed out just so landlords can raise rents. In California, Just Causes are actions like criminal activity, failure to pay rent, damage to the property, or violation of the lease agreement which will still be supported. Also, an apartment owner can evict if they (or a relative) want to move in, or for extensive remodeling, but in these cases, they must pay relocation expenses to the renter.

Lastly, there is a provision for a seven member Rental Housing Commission, appointed by the City Council, which will oversee the program and make recommendations to the council, such as how much to raise or lower the fees on apartments. They also hear appeals of the hearing officer's decisions. Like all other city commissions and committees, they will not be paid. The commission will consist of two apartment owners or realtors, two renters, and three people who fall into neither category.

This is just one solution available to relieve the growing pressure on the housing in San Mateo County. Many communities are seeing local teachers, nurses, first responders, service industry employees, the elderly, veterans and most young people being priced out their neighborhoods. Families are finding they can no longer afford to live here. The loss of affordable housing for low and middle income workers, on whom we depend for our daily needs, will lead to overcrowding, traffic, parking congestion and pollution in neighborhoods due to a higher occupancy per unit as people do more sharing of living spaces. These are social ills that affect all of us who live here.

Fair housing is the cornerstone of a healthy community. Please stand with the renters – vote for Measure C.

Thank you on behalf of the Coastside Democrats' Board,

Bill Kehoe, President