



October 25th, 2022

San Diego City Council
202 C Street, 10th Floor
San Diego, CA 92101

RE: Climate Action Campaign Supports Stronger Tenant Protections

City Councilmembers,

On behalf of the Climate Action Campaign, we'd like to express support and urge the city council to pass a stronger and enforceable update to the 2004 Tenants' Right to Know Regulations.

We simply cannot solve the climate crisis without simultaneously solving the housing crisis through both preserving and producing affordable housing in the urban core. San Diego must take steps now to ensure that the transition to a zero carbon future does not burden or displace impacted communities by prioritizing climate and housing investments in communities of concern. Passing a stronger tenant protection ordinance is necessary to create inclusive communities that prioritize safe, affordable, healthy, and stable housing so that all can thrive in San Diego.

The housing crisis in San Diego disproportionately affects low-income communities, including those experiencing homelessness, people of color, and immigrants. Approximately 14.5 percent of San Diegans—almost 200,000 people—live below the poverty line.¹ According to the recent [Voice of San Diego article](#) “San Diegans Are Falling into Homelessness Faster Than the Region Can House Them”, the Regional Task Force on Homelessness, which coordinates the countywide response to the crisis, reports that 15,327 people sought homeless services for the first time over the last 12 months – outpacing the 11,861 formerly unhoused people who moved

¹ 1 U.S. Census Bureau, 2013-2017 American Community Survey.

into housing. This is while the State eviction moratorium and City-wide no fault eviction moratorium were still in place.

While tenants had access to these local, state, and federal eviction protections and rent relief programs over the last few years due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the last remaining protection for City of San Diego tenants expired on September 30, 2022. City council must pass permanent tenant protections to ensure all San Diegans can plan for a future in the city. Permanent tenant protections must require landlords pursuing no-fault evictions to provide tenants with notices in writing, up to six months of fair market rent, with the potential for increased payments to tenants who are elderly or disabled, and right of first refusal for certain displaced tenants. These protections must also include protections for tenants facing landlord retaliation, including the ability to pursue stronger legal remedies. As San Diego tenants continue to experience rising rents, permanent tenant protections must also include a pathway for tenants to sublease and add family members to their unit. Furthermore, city council must foster housing stability for students and their families from certain no-fault evictions giving them an opportunity to close out their school year without interruptions to their education. Finally, permanent tenant protections must include safeguards for those tenants entering into buyout agreements.

Passing strong and enforceable tenant protections is a key tool that can contribute to preventing San Diegans from entering homelessness, raising the living standards for all San Diego families. Tenant protections also allow for families to continue to live in bikeable, walkable neighborhoods away from sprawling areas that restrict affordable housing supply and promote divestment in existing communities, exacerbate climate change by inducing mega-commutes and traffic congestion, increase wildfire risks, and destroy natural habitats. As the city council continues to work on addressing the homelessness and housing affordability crisis, it is imperative permanent tenant protections are passed. For these reasons, we urge you to pass permanent strong tenant protections as soon as possible.

Madison Coleman

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Policy Advocate

Climate Action Campaign