
General Public Comment 3.18.25

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To CityClerk <CityClerk@longbeach.gov>

-EXTERNAL-

On Friday, March 7, 2025, Los Angeles City Council voted unanimously to pass an interim ordinance temporarily removing renovation work as a basis for eviction. This change went into effect immediately, and remains in place until August 1, 2025, or whenever a permanent ordinance is passed (whichever comes first). **Long Beach must follow the lead of their LA City colleagues by eliminating the substantial remodel eviction, ensuring safe and affordable housing, and providing an alternative system for repairs on the city's aging housing stock.**

The City should act immediately, as it already has feasibility studies supporting the removal of the substantial remodel dating back to December 2021.

Landlords in California have a history of abusing substantial remodel evictions to raise the rent, retaliate against tenants, and achieve other motives unrelated to the need for remodels. Landlords across California use the remodel loophole to evict tenants paying below market rate rent. They then list the units at much higher rents pushing out lower-income families who are disproportionately people of color.

This is not limited to "unscrupulous" landlords. This practice is so widespread and technically legal that notorious landlord attorney Dennis Block PUBLICLY described the substantial remodel loophole as a way to "beat rent control". If a landlord has no legal reason to evict a tenant, Dennis Block PUBLICLY encourages landlords to use substantial remodels to remove tenants paying below market-rate rents. Bornstein Law, another landlord law firm, states on their website that in advising a landlord who wanted to sell her property, they "determined that the only convenient and legal means to transition her tenants out is through a substantial remodel that would not only enable the owner to sell the property as vacant but also provide upside potential. By renovating the kitchen or bathroom (or both) in each unit, it will sell for more." For landlords, substantial remodel evictions are convenient and profit-motivated, for tenants they are devastating acts of displacement.

Since the vast majority of housing units in the city will require significant and major maintenance in the next few years, this means that a large number of tenants will be impacted by substantial remodel evictions in the coming years. This is an impending crisis, and the city must work to remove substantial remodels now.