



Kriss Worthington

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ACTION CALENDAR

January 30, 2018

(Continued from December 19, 2017)

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
From: Councilmembers Kriss Worthington, Kate Harrison, Ben Bartlett, and Cheryl Davila
Subject: Endorsement of the 2018 Affordable Housing Act State Ballot Initiative

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Council encourages citizens to sign the 2018 Affordable Housing Act State ballot initiative and that the City of Berkeley endorses the Act.

BACKGROUND:

The 2018 Affordable Housing Act State ballot initiative would make living in California a more affordable experience, especially for members of our own Berkeley community. The initiative titled, “Expands Local Governments’ Authority to Enact Rent Control on Residential Property” would repeal the Costa-Hawkins Rental Housing Act, which currently allows owners to decide the market value of their property, and increase rent at their will. Repealing this damaging policy would restore the possibility of vacancy control and empower California cities to create local policies that would ensure access to affordable housing.

In recent years, California has seen a significant increase in housing prices. In San Francisco, housing typically costs more than double the California apartment median rate of \$1,410. Additionally, Berkeley has the 8th highest rent of all California cities. With such high rent prices, California citizens struggle to find and maintain affordable housing. Even two-income households struggle to finance both housing and essential necessities.

It’s time to make housing affordability a reality in our city and our state. By supporting this initiative and encouraging signatures we can get the 2018 Affordable Housing Act on the ballot. Once the initiative is on the ballot, endorsing the act will be a significant step towards making affordable housing a reality.

Our first preference would be for the state legislature to take action. Recently, the California State Assembly’s Housing Committee’s failed to move AB 1506 out of committee for a full Assembly vote. Support for this ballot initiative is meant to put pressure on the state legislature to reconsider and take action on repealing Costa Hawkins.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS: Minimal.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY: Consistent with Berkeley’s Environmental Sustainability Goals and no negative impact.

CONTACT PERSON:

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LINK TO TEXT OF INITIATIVE:

https://www.oag.ca.gov/system/files/initiatives/pdfs/17-0041%20%28Affordable%20Housing%29_0.pdf