



Kate Harrison  
Councilmember District 4

CONSENT CALENDAR  
September 10<sup>th</sup>, 2019

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Councilmembers Kate Harrison, Ben Bartlett, Sophie Hahn,  
and Rigel Robinson

Subject: Resolution in Support of Congresswoman Barbara Lee's Resolution (H. Res. 429): Affirming the Right of All Renters to a Safe, Affordable, and Decent Home.

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a resolution in support of H. Res. 429, a resolution introduced by Congresswoman Barbara Lee. Send a letter of support to Congresswoman Lee.

BACKGROUND

The Department of Housing and Urban Development's nationwide survey found that 552,830 individuals were homeless on a single night in 2018.<sup>1</sup> In the city of Berkeley itself, there are 1,200 homeless individuals.<sup>2</sup> Additionally, there were 2.3 million evictions in 2016 alone, according to National Public Radio.<sup>3</sup>

The underlying cause of this epidemic is rising housing costs. The Brookings Institute finds in 2018 that housing prices are triple the annual household income in median U.S. neighborhoods. In fact, while income levels have remained the same for roughly the last decade, housing prices have exponentially increased with median asking rents increasing by 70 percent.<sup>4</sup>

Additionally, these high rates of eviction disproportionately affect low income residents and minority populations. In a study conducted by Harvard University which looked at

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<sup>1</sup> "State of Homelessness in America"

<https://endhomelessness.org/homelessness-in-america/homelessness-statistics/state-of-homelessness-report/>

<sup>2</sup> "Homelessness in Berkeley: The Fact Sheet"

<https://www.berkeleyside.com/2016/06/29/homelessness-in-berkeley-the-fact-sheet>

<sup>3</sup> "First Ever Evictions Database Shows: 'We're in the Middle of a Housing Crisis'"

<https://www.npr.org/2018/04/12/601783346/first-ever-evictions-database-shows-were-in-the-middle-of-a-housing-crisis>

<sup>4</sup> "Housing in the U.S. is too expensive, too cheap, and just right. It just depends on where you live"

<https://www.brookings.edu/research/housing-in-the-u-s-is-too-expensive-too-cheap-and-just-right-it-depends-on-where-you-live/>

over 300,000 evictions across the United States between 2004 and 2014, 80 percent of those evicted were people of color.<sup>5</sup>

Congresswoman Lee's H. Res. 429, first introduced in 2017 as H. Con. Res. 74, and reintroduced in 2019, supports significant federal funding in housing resources, supports renters' rights, and reaffirms housing as a basic human right. In 2018, Berkeley City Council unanimously approved a resolution supporting H. Con. Res. 74, and it is reaffirming its support for H. Res. 429 in the new legislative cycle.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

No impact. Clerk time necessary to send letter.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

No impact.

CONTACT PERSON

Kate Harrison, Berkeley City Councilmember, (510) 981-7140

ATTACHMENTS

- 1: Resolution
- 2: Letter
- 3: Previous Council Resolution Supporting H. Con Res. 74

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<sup>5</sup> "Discrimination in Evictions: Empirical Evidence and Legal Challenges"  
[https://scholar.harvard.edu/files/mdesmond/files/greenberg\\_et\\_al\\_.pdf](https://scholar.harvard.edu/files/mdesmond/files/greenberg_et_al_.pdf)

RESOLUTION NO. ##,###-N.S.

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF H. RES. 429: AFFIRMING THE RIGHT OF ALL  
RENTERS TO A SAFE, AFFORDABLE, AND DECENT HOME

WHEREAS, roughly 2.3 million people were evicted from their homes in 2016; and

WHEREAS, median rent prices have increased by 70 percent in the past decade; and

WHEREAS, people of color are more likely to get evicted from a home; and

WHEREAS, The Department of Housing and Urban Development's nationwide survey found that roughly 500,000 individuals experience homelessness on a given night; and

WHEREAS, Congresswoman Barbara Lee's resolution supports significant federal funding in housing resources, including affordable housing, supports renters' rights, and reaffirms housing as a basic human right;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Berkeley urges Congress to pass and the President to sign into law H. Res. 429; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this resolution be sent to Congresswoman Barbara Lee.

The Honorable Barbara Lee  
2470 Rayburn House  
Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

**Re: Support from Berkeley City Council for H. Res. 429: Affirming the Right of All Renters to a Safe, Affordable, and Decent Home**

Dear Congresswoman Lee,

We, the Berkeley City Council, wish to express our support for H. Res. 429, which supports the bolstering of housing resources and affordable housing and affirms that everyone has a right to decent, affordable housing.

The HUD's nationwide survey found that 552,830 individuals were homeless on a single night in 2018. In our city of Berkeley, there are 1,200 homeless individuals. Additionally, there were 2.3 million evictions in 2016 alone, according to National Public Radio. This crisis is driven by rising housing costs. The Brookings Institute finds in 2018 that housing prices are triple the annual household income in median U.S. neighborhoods. In fact, while income levels have remained the same for roughly the last decade, housing prices have exponentially increased, with median asking rents increasing by 70 percent.

Low income and minority populations are disproportionately affected. A Harvard University study examining over 300,000 evictions across the U.S. between 2004 and 2014 found 80 percent of those evicted were people of color.

H. Res. 429 addresses these problems by supporting significant federal funding in housing resources, supporting renters' rights, and reaffirming housing as a basic human right. The Council supports H. Res. 429 and believes it is crucial towards making housing more affordable for everyone.

Thank you for your leadership on affordable housing.  
Sincerely,

Berkeley City Council  
Mayor Arreguin,  
Councilmembers



Councilmember Ben Bartlett  
City of Berkeley, District 3

CONSENT CALENDAR  
March 13, 2018

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Councilmembers Ben Bartlett, Sophie Hahn, and Cheryl Davila

Subject: Support for the Congresswoman Barbara Lee's Resolution (H. Con. Res. 74) Affirming the Right of All Renters to a Safe, Affordable, and Decent Home

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a Resolution of support for H.Con.Res.74 of 2017, a resolution that has been introduced by Congresswoman Barbara Lee. Send a copy of the resolution to Congresswoman Barbara Lee.

BACKGROUND

Approximately 2.5 million peoples are evicted in the United States each year.<sup>1</sup> Approximately 12 million renters and homeowner households pay over 50% of in their incomes for housing.<sup>2</sup> The Department of Housing and Urban Development's 2016 point-in-time count found that over 500,000 people experienced homelessness every night in the United States, including over 120,000 children.

Despite growing inequality and stubbornly high poverty rates, the number of affordable apartments continues to decline. According to a study by the Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation<sup>3</sup> (FHLMC), the number of affordable apartments designated for low-income families dropped over 60% between 2010 and 2016.

Rapidly rising rents across the country have pushed many long-time residents and families out of the communities they call home.

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<sup>1</sup> Frontline. "In America's Affordable Housing Crisis, More Demand but Less Supply" Frontline. Retrieved February 13, 2018. <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/article/in-americas-affordable-housing-crisis-more-demand-but-less-supply/>

<sup>2</sup> The Department of Housing and Urban Development. "Affordable Housing" The Department of Housing and Urban Development. Retrieved February 13, 2018. [https://www.hud.gov/program\\_offices/comm\\_planning/affordablehousing/](https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/comm_planning/affordablehousing/)

<sup>3</sup> Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation. "Rental Affordability Is Worsening" Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation. Retrieved February 13, 2018. [http://www.freddiemac.com/multifamily/pdf/rental\\_affordability\\_worsening.pdf](http://www.freddiemac.com/multifamily/pdf/rental_affordability_worsening.pdf)

Congresswoman Lee's H. Con. Res. 74 of 2017 would support increasing federal funding in order to expand access to affordable housing and help address homelessness, oppose federal funding cuts to affordable housing, support efforts to preserve and rehabilitate existing affordable housing, support strengthened federal fair housing laws, support expansion of renters' rights, and affirm that housing is a basic human right.

CONTACT PERSON

Councilmember Ben Bartlett, 510-981-7130

Attachments:

- 1: Resolution in support of Congresswoman Barbara Lee's Resolution (H. Con. Res. 74) Affirming the Right of All Renters to a Safe, Affordable, and Decent Home
- 2: Text of H. Con. Res. 74

RESOLUTION NO. ##,###-N.S.

SUPPORT FOR THE CONGRESSWOMAN BARBARA LEE'S RESOLUTION (H. CON. RES. 74) AFFIRMING THE RIGHT OF ALL RENTERS TO A SAFE, AFFORDABLE, AND DECENT HOME

WHEREAS, approximately 2.5 million peoples are evicted in the United States each year; and

WHEREAS, approximately 12 million renters and homeowner households pay over 50% of in their incomes for housing; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Housing and Urban Development's 2016 point-in-time count found that over 500,000 people experienced homelessness every night in the United States, including over 120,000 children; and

WHEREAS, despite growing inequality and stubbornly high poverty rates, the number of affordable apartment continues to decline; and

WHEREAS, according to a study by the Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation (FHLMC), the number of affordable apartments designated for low-income families dropped over 60% between 2010 and 2016; and

WHEREAS, rapidly rising rents across the country have pushed many long-time residents and families out of the communities they call home; and

WHEREAS, Congresswoman Barbara Lee's resolution (H. Con. Res. 74) affirms the rights of all renters to a safe, affordable, and decent home by supporting increasing funding in order to expand access to affordable housing and help address homelessness, opposing federal funding cuts to affordable housing, supporting efforts to preserve and rehabilitate existing affordable housing, supporting strengthened federal fair housing laws, supporting expansion of renters' rights, and affirming that housing is a basic human right.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Berkeley calls upon Congress to pass and the President to sign H. Con. Res. 74.

115TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. CON. RES. 74

Affirming the right of all renters to a safe, affordable, and decent home.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 27, 2017

Ms. LEE (for herself, Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California, Mrs. BEATTY, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, and Mr. ELLISON) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Financial Services, and in addition to the Committees on the Budget, and the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

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## CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Affirming the right of all renters to a safe, affordable, and decent home.

Whereas housing is a basic human right;

Whereas evidence-based research has shown that families with safe, decent, and affordable homes are better able to find employment, achieve economic mobility, perform better in school, and maintain improved health;

Whereas investing in affordable housing strengthens our economy, creates jobs, boosts families' incomes, and encourages further development;

Whereas far too many families living in urban, suburban, and rural communities struggle to afford their rent each

month, putting them at increased risk of eviction and homelessness;

Whereas according to the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) point-in-time count of 2016, there were 549,928 people in the United States experiencing homelessness on any given night, including over 120,000 children;

Whereas homelessness has become so pervasive that some States and cities have declared that homelessness has reached a state of emergency;

Whereas major progress towards the national goals for ending homelessness in our Nation has stalled in the absence of increased funding;

Whereas a shortage of affordable housing exists in every State and major metropolitan area;

Whereas a full-time worker earning the Federal minimum wage cannot afford a modest two-bedroom apartment in any State, metropolitan area, or county in the United States;

Whereas over half of all renters are cost-burdened, paying more than 30 percent of their income for housing, and 71 percent of extremely low-income households are severely cost-burdened, paying more than half of their income for housing;

Whereas rapidly rising rents across the country have pushed many long-time residents and families out of the communities they call home;

Whereas closed waiting lists and long waits mean only a quarter of the families who qualify for housing assistance actually receive it;

Whereas the role of Federal affordable housing investments is even more important given the limited ability of the private market alone to address these needs;

Whereas various programs at the Department of Housing and Urban Development help to subsidize housing for more than 4,000,000 low-income families, including the Public Housing program, the Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers (HCV) program, the Section 8 Project-Based Rental Assistance program, the Section 202 Supportive Housing for the Elderly program, the Section 811 Supportive Housing for Persons with Disabilities program, and the Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) program;

Whereas despite leveraging billions of dollars in private resources to preserve and expand the supply of affordable housing, affordable housing programs continue to be chronically underfunded despite their success at providing safe housing to families in need;

Whereas chronic underfunding of the Public Housing Capital Fund has led to a backlog of more than \$26,000,000,000 in capital repairs and deteriorating conditions for residents;

Whereas without Federal investments, many more families would be homeless, living in substandard or overcrowded conditions, or struggling to meet other basic needs because too much of their limited income would be used to pay rent;

Whereas low Federal spending caps required by the Budget Control Act of 2011 (Public Law 112–25) have decreased funding for affordable housing and community development programs;

Whereas these austere spending caps threaten affordable housing and community development for millions of low income families;

Whereas even renters with housing subsidies often face barriers to finding housing providers willing to rent to them;

Whereas under current Federal law, housing discrimination against a renter is illegal if it is based on race, color, religion, sex, familial status, national origin, or disability;

Whereas renters should be protected against housing discrimination through stronger enforcement of fair housing laws; and

Whereas despite various clarifying memos from HUD, the re-entry community continues to face barriers in trying to secure access to federally assisted housing: Now, therefore, be it

1        *Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate*  
2 *concurring)*, That the House of Representatives—

3            (1) supports lifting the spending caps required  
4            by the Budget Control Act of 2011 and robustly  
5            funding programs to increase access to affordable  
6            housing and address homelessness at the Depart-  
7            ment of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)  
8            and other Federal agencies;

9            (2) opposes any cuts to Federal investments in  
10            affordable housing programs at the Department of  
11            Housing and Urban Development and other Federal  
12            agencies;

1           (3) supports increased funding to the Public  
2           Housing Capital Fund to address the backlog of  
3           capital repairs for public housing;

4           (4) supports expanded funding for the National  
5           Housing Trust Fund to boost the supply of afford-  
6           able housing available to extremely low-income fami-  
7           lies;

8           (5) supports efforts to preserve and rehabilitate  
9           existing housing to maintain and increase the avail-  
10          able stock of affordable housing and proposals by  
11          local entities to prevent any net loss of overall af-  
12          fordable housing units receiving Federal subsidies;

13          (6) supports strengthened Federal fair housing  
14          laws;

15          (7) affirms that renters may not be barred from  
16          federally assisted housing solely on the basis of a  
17          criminal record;

18          (8) supports expansion of renters' rights, in-  
19          cluding the right of tenants to organize tenant asso-  
20          ciations; and

21          (9) affirms that housing is a basic human right.

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