



Southern California Rental Housing Association

March 25, 2020

Mayor John Minto and Santee City Council Members
City of Santee
10601 Magnolia Avenue
Santee, CA 92071

RE: Item 14 – Resolution Declaring Regarding the Existence of a Local Emergency

Dear Mayor Minto and Council Members:

On behalf of the Southern California Rental Housing Association (SCRHA) and its nearly 3,000 members who represent over 128,000 rental units in Southern California, we are writing to commend the city for its quick response to the Coronavirus/Covid-19 emergency and urging you to consider assistance for all Santee residents during this difficult time.

With regards to Item 14 on the March 25 agenda, we respectfully request that you adopt Resolution Option B at this time. There is no rush to create an ordinance as the courts have suspended all unlawful detainer actions through April 3. Additionally, several jurisdictions, including the County and City of San Diego, have passed or are considering their own ordinances. Our members own and manage property throughout the San Diego region, therefore, implementing an ordinance that is the same or similar, rather than a patchwork of regulation during an already confusing time, would serve to benefit residents and landlords alike.

We understand that protections against evictions is crucial as employment situations are creating a scenario where many people are unable to work, and therefore, unable to meet rental payment obligations. Our organization is in full support of balanced measures that are designed to keep Californians healthy and housed.

As you weigh the eviction moratorium, we want to remind you that roughly 2/3rds of rental property owners in the San Diego region are small independent owners who rely on their rental income to meet their financial obligations, and in some cases have no other source of income.

We are in support of a system in which the tenant notifies the landlord, preferably in writing, on or before the day rent is due. Communication early and often will assist both parties in navigating this situation.

We urge you to create a clearly defined process for notifying a landlord of financial hardship, including requiring the following to prove substantial loss of income:

- letter from an employer citing COVID-19 as a reason for reduced work hours or termination



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- paycheck stubs from before and after the COVID-19 outbreak
- bank statements showing financial situation before and after the outbreak

Additionally, **we would like to suggest language that affirms a rental property owner and/or manager's ability to enter into a payment agreement with residents.** Some individuals and families may have the ability to pay some rent during the emergency, which could help offset large balloon amounts coming due when the moratorium is lifted.

Any payback period should be consistent with the length of the emergency. We would suggest the following language: *"Tenants who were afforded eviction protection under this Ordinance shall have a time period equivalent to the length of the moratorium to pay their landlords all unpaid rent. If a tenant opts to move while the ordinance is effective, all owed rent is due upon move-out. At the end of the defined payback period, a landlord may evict a tenant who has not paid all outstanding rent and resort to all remedies available to the landlord under the lease and the law."*

We strongly urge the city to request that local, state and federal elected leaders adopt economic aid packages to ensure landlords have minimal impacts to their operations such as:

- Rental assistance to tenants in the form of grants
- Suspension of the collection of property taxes
- Forbearance on water and sewer payments as well as any other city payments that may be deferred
- Low-Interest loans

Again, thank you for your leadership during this crisis. We look forward to working with your offices to ensure residents are safe and housed during this emergency, while not placing property owners in financial hardship.

Sincerely,

Kendra Bork
President

Alan Pentico, CAE
Executive Director