

## BUDGET & FINANCE

### MOTION

The City of Los Angeles is facing a housing displacement epidemic that is contributing to its homelessness crisis. Low-income tenants face eviction or the threat of eviction, sometimes through harassment and coercion, sometimes due to property redevelopment.

According to the Los Angeles Right to Counsel Coalition, from 2014 to 2016, 162,717 households faced eviction in Los Angeles County courts, with about 30,000 evictions each year in the City of Los Angeles. With the 2018 Homeless Count showing nearly 10,000 people experiencing homelessness for the first time, it is reasonable to conclude that the combined impacts of evictions and rental housing unaffordability are contributing substantially to the homelessness crisis in Los Angeles and impeding efforts to reduce the number of unhoused Angelenos.

As one solution, state legislators, housing and tenant advocates and academic experts are promoting increased statewide protections for tenants and a basic "right to counsel" to ensure that representation is available for tenants facing eviction. The City Council has responded by approving Council File 18-0610 (Koretz-Wesson) calling for the development of a Right to Counsel program in Los Angeles. Such a program would curb displacement, increase housing stability, and reduce inflows into homelessness.

The City of Los Angeles would stand to benefit financially as well from implementing a Right to Counsel program. Taxpayer costs could be offset by the savings from decreased spending on shelters, sanitation, rapid rehousing, and other services and systems that are impacted due to displacement. Tenant and landlord expenses also could be reduced by reducing the number of cases requiring court action.

A start-up Right to Counsel would provide multiple levels of interventions including tenant and landlord education, pre-eviction counseling and legal representation. The first-year cost of a phased-in approach is estimated at \$10M for interventions for 10,000 tenants and up to approximately 5,000 evictions.

I THEREFORE MOVE that to address the needs detailed above, the CAO should be directed to work with the Mayor and City Council to identify \$10 million for estimated Right to Counsel expenses described below, including, but not limited to, HEAP funds, and also including prospective outside funding sources:

Budget Estimate	Estimate
<b>Personnel Costs</b>	
Pre-Eviction Services for 10,000 Tenants	\$1,210,000
Court Representation for 5,000 Cases	\$6,424,000
Rental Assistance Personnel	\$200,000
Total Personnel Costs	\$7,834,000
Rental Assistance	\$2,000,000
Data Collection	\$166,000
<b>Total Proposed Costs</b>	<b>\$10,000,000</b>

PRESENTED BY: Paul Koretz

PAUL KORETZ, Councilmember, Fifth District

SECONDED BY: Mark J. Wesson

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