



California Apartment Association

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Honorable Mayor McDonnell
Petaluma City Council
City of Petaluma
11 English Street
Petaluma, CA

RE: Residential Tenancy Protections – Oppose

Dear Mayor McDonnell and City Council,

The California Apartment Association (CAA) is the largest statewide rental housing trade association in the country. We proudly represent over 3,000 rental housing providers in Sonoma County who provide over 30,000 homes for Sonoma County families.

CAA is extremely dismayed by the city's misguided research, peer comparisons and outreach processes outlined in the March 2, 2023 staff report. Based on the information presented in that report, the city council does not have adequate information to make an informed policy decision on the Residential Tenancy Protections Ordinance.

The following points have been identified to further exemplify our position in opposing Petaluma's ordinance and the city staff report.

The staff report failed to provide council the details of the gravity in repercussions of the following defined laws in the ordinance. Ordinance 2823 states housing providers would be unable to evict persons under the following requirements:

- Committing Waste (pg. 9). Housing Providers will be unable to protect their surrounding tenants, community members and neighbors from individuals committing neighborhood blight. Landlords will be unable to lawfully evict tenants that potentially pose future infestations and public health threats to all surrounding inhabitants. Petaluma will jeopardize community members with individuals causing health hazards that can eventually lead to broader public health issues.
- Subletting against Lease (pg. 9). Housing provider's rental properties can be sublet by tenants, posing a substantiated issue for most lease agreements. Unauthorized individuals can now occupy the premises posing a safety concern to all surrounding dwellings and tenants. Unvetted individuals living on the property promote the potential to operate and convert their home into a short-term rental, contributing to the already limited housing stock. Subleasing will lead to disruptive illicit businesses within a residential area fully protected by legal repercussions by the city of Petaluma.

Furthermore, the staff report makes false comparisons. Most of the cities that staff cites and holds up as examples are cities that have very robust regulatory ordinances that require significant staffing, fees on housing providers, and layers of bureaucratic requirements that do nothing to ensure housing affordability and availability. In addition, the comparison to Alameda County is inaccurate and misleading. The Alameda County Board of Supervisors rejected these ordinances at their February 28, 2023 meeting. Citing them for comparative purposes misguides the city council.

CAA strongly urges Petaluma city council to listen to their community and let the current ordinance expire. Petaluma renters have robust protections and resources under existing law, The California Protection Act AB 1482. State law currently protects tenants from their leases being terminated without reason and relocation assistance at no fault to the renter. It is imperative the city of Petaluma focus their resources on educating their community of renters about their existing protections through AB 1482.

To say that these protections do not exist is nothing more than fearmongering by the same organizations that fought so hard for and celebrated the passage of AB 1482 in 2019. CAA has been recognized for its robust outreach and compliance education materials on this law and is prepared to work with the City of Petaluma to ensure both housing providers and their residents are aware of their rights and responsibilities under this law.

There is no justifiable data that Petaluma needs to permanently enact any laws that go beyond the California Tenant Protection Act. The city council would be well served to focus its energy and efforts on education of existing law and ensuring sufficient homes are built that are affordable and available to meet the needs of Petaluma families.

Sincerely,

Angelina Soldatos

Angelina Soldatos
Public Affairs Director
California Apartment Association