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June 6, 2015

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Submitted in Housing Committee

Council File No: 14-0/150

Item No.: 6

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~~Item~~ Communication from
the public

The Hon. Felipe Fuentes
City Hall/Room 455
200 N. Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

The Hon. Curren Price
City Hall/Room 420
200 N. Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

The Hon. Gilbert Cedillo
City Hall/Room 470
200 N. Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: Housing Committee
Item No. 6
June 10, 2015
Bootlegged Units/Amnesty

Dear Friends:

I am a Member of AAGLA. My comments, observations and conclusions are my own.

Approximately 15 years ago, the City of Santa Monica discovered that many bootlegged, non-permitted, non-conforming and illegal garage conversions were being identified through the Department of Building and Safety, and systematically eliminated and removed. Yes, cheap or affordable housing was being lost.

Santa Monica's City Council adopted an emergency ordinance: Amnesty for bootlegged units. The Owners could apply to the Department of Building and Safety on an expedited, short form, and receive a building permit wherein the rear, medium and side setback Requirements were waived. The need to provide parking was equally waived.

The units had to be reconfigured or constructed using existing modern Building Code standards. Safety and habitability were never compromised.

So, within a short period of time, Santa Monica Recaptured its illegal units. They were registered under the Rent Control, and remain protected for Tenants.

Over the last 30 months, or longer, Tenant Activists and Housing Providers have met to negotiate an **ADOPTION OF THE SANTA MONICA PLAN.**

Some have estimated there are approximately 600,000 bootlegged units in the City. LAHD indicates that approximately 2,000 were removed in their study.

The program is simple:

1. 15 month amnesty;
2. Rear, intermediate and side setback requirements to be waived;
3. Parking requirements to be waived;
4. Unit to enjoy RSO protection;
5. Short form building permit application;
6. Reconstruction consistent with modern Building and Safety Code provisions;
7. No relocation plan required, and;
8. Cost and expense of reconfiguration and construction to be the responsibility of the Owner.

The outreach shall be the responsibility of the City and the Apartment Associations.

Since this is an amnesty program, there is no anxiety or fear on the part of an Owner to apply to the program insofar as the building permit shall be issued because any obstacles heretofore faced, such as the unit having been built on the property line or perhaps having insufficient parking, has been addressed in this emergency ordinance and heretofore waived.

Again, most of the bootlegged units are in existing apartment complexes.

Thank you for your consideration.

Very truly yours,

Michael Millman