

MOTION

The most vulnerable communities in Los Angeles will continue to feel the profound impacts of the COVID-19 global pandemic long after this crisis is over. Whether these communities are able to recover from this crisis depends in part on whether they are able to maintain their housing during this pandemic and in the aftermath. Prior to this pandemic, one in three working families were paying more than half their income for rent, putting them one emergency away from eviction. These families were living paycheck to paycheck and often making difficult decisions on how to pay for their necessities on their limited paycheck.

The COVID-19 Safer at Home Order has resulted in a significant loss of income for these low-wage workers and working families. According to the California Employment Development Department, 20.3% of Los Angeles County residents are now unemployed. Families who were making painful choices on how to spend their limited funds now find themselves without an income and unable to work due to the Safer at Home Order.

Foreseeing this, in March, the City Council enacted strong tenant protections to ensure that no City resident impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic can be evicted, and that renters may defer their rent during the pandemic. These protections provide tenants with 12 months to pay the deferred rent. In addition, in April, the City Council created the COVID-19 Emergency Renters Relief Program to help tenants pay the deferred rent. Since the creation of the program, Councilmembers have dedicated approximately \$3 million in their discretionary funds to this program. Although the almost \$3 million demonstrates the Council's commitment to this program, it won't be sufficient to meet the demands of this program.

The federal government, through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act, provided the City with approximately \$700 million in funding for COVID-19 response and recovery. Housing stability and rental assistance are an essential part of COVID-19 recovery. It is exponentially cheaper to keep families and individuals housed than to provide assistance when someone falls into homelessness. It is imperative that this public health crisis does not result in an even bigger homelessness crisis.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the City Council allocate \$100 million of the COVID-19 Federal Relief Fund to the COVID-19 Emergency Renters Relief Program.

I FURTHER MOVE that the Housing and Community Investment Department to report back on the operational and technological needs to launch the program.

ORIGINAL

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Presented by: 
NURY MARTINEZ
Council President, 6th District

Seconded by: 