

MOTION

For more than a decade, Angelenos have faced a tremendous affordable housing crisis that has been throwing tens of thousands of families into poverty, into substandard housing, and into homelessness. With the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting economic calamity, that crisis is worsening, threatening to reach unprecedented and increasingly painful levels.

Los Angeles needs new solutions to the housing crisis, and it needs them urgently. An essential solution is social housing: decommodified housing -- purchased or funded by the government, by community land trusts, or by nonprofit agencies -- that remains permanently off the market to house Angelenos and strengthen neighborhoods.

Unlike the widely disparaged model of U.S. public housing - which suffered from under-investment, poor design, segregation, and lack of political support - social housing is generally mixed-income, adequately served by public transportation, has access to amenities and shops, located and regulated to deter discrimination, and self-financing after initial public investment, with tenants paying rents on a sliding scale. Last fall, a national coalition of state and local grassroots organizations called for social housing. The federal Homes for All Act, pending in the U.S. House of Representatives, calls for 12 million new units of social housing. In his April 19, 2020, State of the City Speech, Mayor Eric Garcetti called for social housing in Los Angeles.

With hundreds of thousands of Angelenos becoming increasingly housing insecure as a result of COVID-19's social and economic impacts, and with the potential of eligible pools of federal funding, there is a unique opportunity for the City of Los Angeles to purchase or help finance the purchase of hotels, motels, apartment buildings and other residential properties. These properties could be managed by nonprofit organizations or community land trusts -- community non-profit organizations that buy and hold land -- to quickly provide housing to move unhoused Angelenos indoors. This could also prove to be a great source of affordable housing for a variety of income levels, and a source of funds for preservation of existing affordable housing by purchasing properties and allowing tenants to remain instead of being displaced.

The federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act provided flexible emergency spending for cities and states, eligible for housing uses. These funds can be used for emergency rental and housing and community development needs. In addition, the law provided Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), which gives broad discretion to use in response to the COVID-19 emergency. The Act further appropriated \$685 million for public

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housing. Other relief packages for cities are being proposed and considered. These federal funds could be sources to finance emergency social housing in Los Angeles.

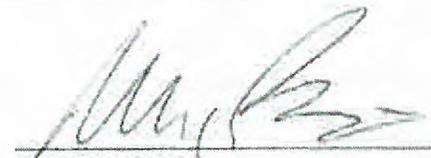
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I THEREFORE MOVE that City Council request that the Office of Mayor Garcetti, using his expanded powers under the COVID-19 State of Emergency, establish a social housing program that could use federal funds to purchase or long-term lease privately owned properties; including hotels, motels, vacant properties, and distressed properties; to provide housing for Angelenos.

Consideration should be given to:

- Potential partnerships with foundations and philanthropies to augment and expand City efforts.
- The partnership role of the County of Los Angeles.
- The feasibility of creating or financing community land trusts to own or steward social housing properties.
- The process to quickly identify hotels, motels, vacant properties, apartments, and other residential properties for potential acquisition.

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