



AB 1487 THE TENANT PROTECTION AND HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION ACT

SUMMARY

AB 1487 would create a statewide eviction defense program in order to target funds towards local efforts to provide legal representation to at-risk tenants. The program will make sure to target those tenants who are most at-risk of falling into homelessness.

BACKGROUND

Evictions and displacement are a major factor contributing to California's homelessness crisis. Temporary moratoria on evictions and foreclosures during the COVID-19 pandemic can only delay this urgent and looming issue. Displacement is projected to dramatically rise in the coming months with far reaching consequences for public health, economic stability, and individuals' well-being.

Data has shown that evictions are not only caused by economic hardships, but are themselves a root cause of poverty and homelessness. In communities across the country and state, shelter trends indicate that the top reason for families to seek shelter was eviction.

After a tenant is evicted, securing housing is often much more difficult as unfavorable eviction court decisions impact their ability to secure public housing or subsidies and landlords may refuse to rent to potential tenants who have been evicted. In fact, nearly 50% of homeless adults list evictions or rent-related issues as a contributor to their homelessness.

THIS BILL

One way to prevent or limit the impacts of an eviction is by providing legal representation and other related services to tenants before and after an eviction case is filed. In California, the Sargent

Shriver Civil Counsel Act funded legal representation for low-income parties. Among eviction cases where Shriver counsel provided representation, about two-thirds of cases were resolved by settlement and 22% of clients were able to remain in their homes. In cases where tenants moved, 89% resulted in some positive outcomes supporting tenants' longer-term housing stability, including:

- 71 % had their move-out dates adjusted
- 79% had their rental debts reduced or waived
- 86% had their unlawful detainer case sealed
- 54% had their credit protected

Eviction defense programs not only help prevent displacement and homelessness for individual tenants but they are also a cost effective, prudent investment for local jurisdictions. A 2019 report on the LA Eviction Defense Program estimated that for every dollar spent on an eviction defense program, Los Angeles would receive approximately \$4.50 in value in avoided costs of emergency shelters, local rehousing programs, and of providing mental and healthcare services to homeless individuals.

This bill is a first step in ensuring that every Californian can access the legal services and support they need to remain housed and avoid falling into homelessness. In light of the COVID-19 global pandemic, this program is even more necessary to help stem a potentially catastrophic increase in displacement and homelessness.

SUPPORT

Housing Now

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

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