

Dear Council Members,

I am writing to you in regard to item #6, Informational Item/Presentation on Eviction Process and Potential Protections by Margaret DeMatteo, Attorney for Legal Aid of Sonoma County.

First it should be noted that Legal Aid of Sonoma County is representing the Plaintiffs in *Yesue v. City of Sebastopol*, which is an active case. I'm not sure why Council is entertaining a group that is actively costing the Citizens of Sebastopol \$100,000s. Clearly, this nonprofit does not care about the health and well-being of our community nor does it care that Sebastopol on the whole has gone above and beyond in its support of services for the unsheltered.

Sebastopol has the highest number of homeless beds per capita of any City in Sonoma County. Sebastopol permanently lost our only downtown and substantial revenue (which we desperately need to fund City services) to homeless housing.

As a resident and voter in Sebastopol, I do not support any further regulations on landlords. We have the State law, which is already in place and gives protections to tenants. The State law has already proven to be legal and has been approved by our elected officials at the State level.

In addition, it does not require any additional staff time to enforce or administer. There is no reason to create an extra layer of bureaucracy when an adequate law is already in place.

The City has extremely limited budget and staff time. If the State provides protections, this should be sufficient for Sebastopol's small population of 7500.

In addition, as Sebastopol's housing stock is extremely limited, adding more restrictions to landlords will encourage them to terminate their long-term renters and convert their properties to AirBNBs which have a much higher monthly rental rate and less restrictions. Why would someone continue renting at below market rate if they can receive 3x market rate in the vocational rental market with no obligations to renters?

It also makes no sense to apply any additional restrictions as Sebastopol City Limits are very small within the larger area of unincorporated West County and unincorporated Sonoma County. Why would we have stricter laws which cover a tiny geographic region? When a house on Fircrest would be covered and a house on Lynch wouldn't be? Wouldn't that give landlords just outside the City Limit more options than landlords within the City Limit? Why add additional restrictions and penalize landlords just because they happen to fall within a tiny geographic area?

Our City does not need to discourage landlords who rent to long-term tenants and does not need an extra layer of bureaucracy when State laws provides good tenant protections and is already in place.

Thank you,
Kate Haug

