

Levesque, Jennifer

From: John Larson [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, August 02, 2021 9:38 AM
To: cityclerk
Subject: Public Hearing Item J-1: Rental Housing Maintenance and Inspection Code

Dear Members of the Merced City Council,

I am writing regarding the proposed Rental Housing Maintenance and Inspection Code being considered by Council. I urge you to reconsider moving forward with this Code.

I understand the good intentions of the City Council in originally proposing something to mitigate blight and sub-standard living conditions in a small fraction of the City's rental properties. As a member of this community, I too am appalled by the lack of care a very small percentage of landlords seem to show their property. And I too would like a solution.

However, I DO NOT believe the proposed Code is the right solution. Nor do I believe that right now is the right time.

The great majority of rental properties in Merced are not part of the problem. Yet, this code places the burden of funding and complying on those owners and their tenants. Address the real issue!

In addition, there are already numerous ways for the city and/or a tenant to address the problems you are seeking to solve. California has some of the most robust tenant protection policies in the United States. Is it possible that something as simple as an Educational Program for Renters could solve this problem without adding layers of bureaucracy?

While I have many other issues with the Code as it is written, for the sake of brevity, I will leave you with this – numerous studies have proven that increasing these types of operational and development costs have dire ramifications on the supply of apartments and homes. They discourage new growth, strangle investment, and only increase the cost of living.

Isn't the supply of housing and, thus, the cost of housing a big enough issue already?

I would suggest that the city take the time to better understand the situation from all stakeholders and work together to devise a real solution.

Thank you for your consideration,

John Larson
Larson Group



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