

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: August 20, 2020

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WHAT: Rally and press conference to demand special meeting of San Mateo County Board of Supervisors to extend residential eviction moratorium

WHEN: Friday, August 21, 2020 at 4:00 p.m.

WHERE: Courtyard at 400 County Center, Redwood City, CA 94063

Tenants and Advocates Urge San Mateo County Board of Supervisors to Take Emergency Action to Prevent Tsunami of COVID-19 Evictions

Redwood City, CA – San Mateo County tenants, with the support of the People’s Alliance of San Mateo County, El Comité de Vecinos de Lado Oeste, Latinos United for a New America (“LUNA”) and others, are demanding an emergency meeting of the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors to extend the residential eviction moratorium before the protections expire on August 30. The Supervisors must extend the moratorium protections to prevent an oncoming wave of mass evictions, the residents say.

Despite the recent surge in COVID-19 cases and the reclosing of hundreds of local businesses, the County Supervisors refused to extend the moratorium again when they last met on August 4. The August 4th meeting was the Supervisors’ last meeting before they went on a one-month recess. Meanwhile, every other Bay Area county has extended its moratorium at least through the end of September. The exigency of the situation for COVID-impacted tenants in San Mateo County is magnified by the Judicial Council’s recent decision to repeal its Emergency Rule 1 which stayed eviction proceedings statewide and the widespread uncertainty about whether the state legislature will be able to finalize COVID-related tenant protections before the end of August.

“Our Supervisors have decided it's more important for landlords to evict laid off workers than for families to stay safely in their homes,” said Jason Tarricone, directing attorney of the housing program at Community Legal Services in East Palo Alto. “Without County protections in place, we are looking at a mass displacement of thousands of vulnerable families during an ongoing health crisis.”

At the last meeting, the eight CORE safety net agencies in the County presented a set of stark realities to the Supervisors. The COREs found that, of the 505 clients surveyed, 46 percent had been out of work since April and had not returned to work in any capacity, 14 percent had returned only on a part-time basis and 71 percent were ineligible for unemployment. Bay Area Equity Atlas has released a report this month, finding that at least 6,900 renter households, including 4,100 children, are at imminent risk of eviction in San Mateo County. (For more findings from the Equity Atlas study, visit their [website](#).) Still, both tenants and tenants’ advocates believe the Supervisors have the tools and the authority prevent this oncoming wave of evictions.

“The Supervisors have the power to stop these evictions and save people’s homes,” said Gabriel Manrique, a community organizer with El Comité and LUNA. “They must extend the moratorium through the end of the state of emergency, pass a policy to make tenants’ COVID-19 rent debt non-evictable debt, and allocate more funding to rental assistance for tenants and mortgage relief for small landlords.”

Residents and their supporters will rally outside of San Mateo County Center (400 County Center, Redwood City) at 4:00 p.m. Program of speakers will begin promptly at 4:20 p.m.