



April 22, 2019

The Honorable Rob Bonta  
California State Assembly  
Sacramento, CA

**RE: AB 1481 - Support**

Dear Assemblymember Bonta:

On behalf of the Planning and Conservation League (PCL), we are writing to express our strong support for AB 1481, which would eliminate arbitrary evictions and require landlords to specify the reason for an eviction before requiring a tenant to move out of their home. Given our state's lack of affordable housing, low-income renters are not able to easily or quickly find suitable replacement housing they can afford when they receive an eviction notice. This bill makes a common-sense change by banning arbitrary evictions that are not based on a specific reason.

We are in a housing affordability crisis *and* a climate crisis, and a primary focus of PCL's advocacy is towards development of policy that supports equitable infill investment in existing communities that will successfully address California's climate and housing goals. In both the "2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan Update" and the "2018 Progress Report" on Sustainable Communities Strategies, the California Air Resources Board has found that to meet our 2030 and 2050 climate goals we need to significantly reduce Vehicle Miles Travelled (VMT) and associated greenhouse gas emissions through more efficient land use and increased transportation options.

Yet, PCL recognizes that targeted investment towards the infill that is needed to meet our climate goals inevitably adds to gentrification and displacement pressures on low-income residents in these existing communities. Thus, this needed infill investment *must* be coupled with anti-displacement protections to guard against the perpetuation of historical patterns of segregation, to ensure the vulnerable residents of these communities equitably reap the benefits of these investments, as well as to ensure that our ability to meet our climate goals is not undermined by forcing low-wage workers into long commutes. Requiring that landlords have a justifiable reason for evicting tenants, as AB 1481 proposes, is one of the essential mechanisms needed to protect low-income residents from this kind of indirect-displacement pressure.

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Current law allows landlords to evict tenants without a reason, absent local controls, on 30- or 60-days' notice, depending on the length of tenancy. Simply put, this is not enough time in today's housing climate for a family to locate, successfully apply for, and move into new housing that is appropriate for their circumstances. Being displaced from one's housing often means being displaced from one's community, requiring not only finding a new home, but often also a new school for one's children, new doctors and medical providers, a new place of worship, and new transportation.

AB 1481 merely requires landlords to have a good reason for evicting their tenants and to list that reason on a notice they are already required to provide. Surely, adding a sentence to such a notice does not pose an undue hardship on landlords, especially where it guards against the hardship of a tenant losing their home arbitrarily. The bill does not change the rights of landlords to evict tenants for reasons such as nonpayment, endangering other tenants, or violating their lease, nor does it change the rights of landlords with respect to what they can do with their property – it still allows for evictions under the Ellis Act, owner move-in, renovations and demolition.

No one should lose their home without a justifiable reason, and we thank you for authoring this important legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Matthew R. Baker".

Matthew Baker, Policy Director  
Planning and Conservation League