

Resolution Supporting the Santa Cruz Rent Control and Tenant Protection Act and the California Affordable Housing Act

WHEREAS, Santa Cruz, California is consistently listed as one of the least affordable cities to live in the country¹, with a recent study showing it as the 4th least affordable market in the world²;

WHEREAS, wages in Santa Cruz have only increased by 4.8% from 2013-2016 while rents have increased 41% in that same time³;

WHEREAS, about half of UCSC's approximately 18,000 undergraduates live off-campus in this precarious market;

WHEREAS, the housing crisis is causing a majority of Santa Cruz tenants, especially low-income tenants, to face rent burden, where more than 30% of their income goes towards paying rent⁴;

WHEREAS, the housing crisis is also causing Santa Cruz tenants to face issues of overcrowding, forced moves, and major problems such as maintenance and unit conditions⁴;

WHEREAS, this is creating a public health crisis where students are forced to live in subpar conditions and sacrifice basic needs such as food to pay for housing and/or tuition;

WHEREAS, housing insecurity has damaging psychological and physical effects on students, causing problems with academic performance and retention⁵;

WHEREAS, the UC Board of Regents have mandated increases in enrollment without providing the necessary funds or resources to accommodate the student body, which will exacerbate the student housing crisis;

¹<https://www.marketwatch.com/story/the-most-unaffordable-place-to-live-in-america-is-2016-06-23>

²<http://demographia.com/dhi.pdf>

³<http://www.cityonahillpress.com/2018/02/15/santa-cruz-freezes-rising-rents/>

⁴<http://noplacelikehomeucsc.org/en/the-survey/>

⁵<http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/1521025115621918>

WHEREAS, rent control and just cause initiatives have been proven to be effective in stabilizing communities through limiting displacement, keeping rents down, and preserving affordable housing⁶;

WHEREAS, the statewide Costa-Hawkins Rental Housing Act exempts single-family homes, duplexes, and units built after 1995 from rent control⁷;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Student Union Assembly strongly endorses the Santa Cruz Rent Control and Tenant Protection Act and supports student and tenant-led efforts to gather signatures and turn out votes for the ballot initiative to win in November 2018;

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Student Union Assembly strongly endorses the California Affordable Housing Act, a repeal of the Costa-Hawkins Rental Housing Act, and supports student and tenant-led efforts to turn out votes for the ballot initiative to win in November 2018;

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Student Union Assembly calls upon the students of UCSC to take action and organize with and as tenants for truly affordable, accessible, and sustainable housing for all;

THEREFORE BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the Student Union Assembly strongly advocates and urges the UCSC administration to provide adequate resources that are necessary to the current and incoming students, including working with the City of Santa Cruz to fund tenant legal services, seriously looking into funding housing cooperatives, and developing affordable housing for students.

⁶<http://urbanhabitat.org/sites/default/files/UH%202018%20Strengthening%20Communities%20Through%20Rent%20Control.pdf>

⁷<http://www.cityonahillpress.com/2018/03/01/costa-hawkins-leaves-gaps-in-rent-freeze/>