

BRIEFING TAKEAWAYS:



United Way Bay Area

TENANT SPEAKER

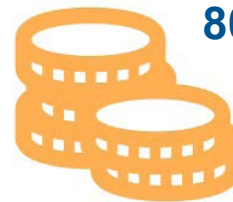
Guillermina Prado

- Many tenants facing eviction are also facing other major events (job loss, health, safety, parenthood, etc.) that contribute to additional financial, mental, and emotional stress.
- Finding new employment does not mean earning the same wage or more. When you receive 25% less of your paycheck, it's difficult to make 25% of rent.
- Even with the updates to ERAP, for the process to go smoothly, landlord cooperation is required. Those of us who aren't able to get landlords to cooperate struggle to make this work.
- Despite applying for rental assistance, sending messages, and calling the landlord, I still received an eviction notice that I needed to leave within 3 days. I have a 12 and 15 year old who are afraid of becoming homeless.
- These stories aren't unique to me, this is happening to many tenants across the state.

TENANTS TOGETHER

Lupe Arreola, Executive Director

- Only 20% of the 458,000 ERAP applications received have been paid off.
- ERAP's extremely slow process is likely to result in a rise in illegal evictions, harassment, and removal of tenants from their homes.
- Tenants are likely to self-evict out of fear of being displaced, a lack of information of what their legal rights are, and intimidation.
- Anti-harassment legislation will become increasingly important, because landlords might be incentivized to evict tenants if they know they will still be eligible for those funding streams even after eviction.
- **Recommendations:** strong rent control legislation for state and local jurisdictions, anti-harassment legislation, and enforcement of these protections by courts.



**80% of funding
remains to be
dispersed.**

LANDLORD

Keisha Browder

- My brothers and I did what we could to cover rent for our tenant who we treated like family. But even after going to court to ask for a forbearance we were only given about **6 months**.
- I applied for ERAP in August and still haven't received funds (in November)
- I have 5 children, one of whom is on their way to college, and it is becoming a financial burden for my brother and I to find the money to cover these costs.
- We have absolutely no intention of evicting Gina, we see her as family, but we have been experiencing this financial strain since 2020.

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PATHWAYS OF HOPE

David Gillanders, Executive Director

- The people we are helping aren't the typical recipients of aid, and for many of them it is their first time applying for this kind of assistance.
- Many of them are working class individuals who have a lot of questions about the kind of information that was being requested.
- **We had a \$20K cap in assistance funds in Orange County, and though we could try to help tenants access the Housing is Key website, some landlords used these opportunities to continue evicting**
- This is not a long term solution to housing affordability across the nation. All this did was reinforce to us the idea that we need legislation that protects tenants first.

CENTRO LEGAL DE LA RAZA

Reetu Mody, Managing Attorney

- One of the tenants we represented was evicted by a landlord after not paying rent after one month. She lost her job at a restaurant, and had experienced domestic violence.
- Her story showed us that we need protection that includes just-cause across the board.
- **Court systems should be equipped with the information to oversee these cases and protect tenants who often do not have legal representation.**
- **Housing needs to be protected in a very different way, not just as a crisis response.**
- **Most landlords (90%) do have representation in legal courts. Courts are using a mediation process that often leaves tenants vulnerable.**
- **Helping tenants helps small landlords, across the board.**

DISCUSSION

Led by Senator Scott Wiener

- Employers have had to change business practices to limit the number of coworkers for COVID safety
- **Landlords discriminate by income. Some landlords have said that they won't accept tenants who are using ERAP money.**
- **Many ran up credit cards, sold cars, deferred expensive medication, etc. just to find extra money to pay for this rental debt. This kind of debt is not covered by rent relief because it is not an arrear, and it represents a long-term barrier for household stability.**