



March 29, 2019

The Honorable Maria Elena Durazo
California State Capitol Room 5066
P.O. Box 942849
Sacramento, CA 94249-0002

Re: SB 529 (Durazo) Tenant associations: eviction for cause: withholding payment of rent – SUPPORT

Dear Senator Durazo,

I am writing on behalf of the California Alliance for Retired Americans (CARA), to support SB 529 (Durazo). CARA is California's largest grassroots senior advocacy organization, representing over 1,000,000 seniors and their families through our 270+ affiliated organizations. Many seniors are tenants on fixed incomes.

In the same way that a labor union is key to winning fair treatment of workers, a tenant association is a crucial part of balancing power between landlord and tenants. Acting together, tenants can gain bargaining power, but too often tenants who organize with their neighbors frequently face retaliation and eviction.

SB 529 recognizes the right to form a tenant association and extends crucial protection to tenant association members. A tenant association shall be defined as a group of tenants from three or more units owned by the same landlord, who form or maintain an association, whether incorporated or unincorporated, to improve housing conditions, amenities, community life, and/or contractual position of its members. Specifically, the bill provides that any tenant who forms or joins a tenant association shall have the following rights:

- No eviction of the tenants in the tenant association except for cause
- The right to engage in rent strike (landlord must bargain in good faith about grievances and may not evict for nonpayment during the negotiation period)
- Five times current penalties for retaliation or violation of this law

This bill will provide essential protections for senior tenants who are often neglected and preyed upon due to fear of retaliation for speaking up about substandard living conditions. For all these reasons, CARA supports SB 529. We look forward to working with you on its passage.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Hene Kelly".

Hene Kelly
Legislative Director
415-533-5244