

To: Mayor Birsan and Concord City Council Members

From: Kevin Michael, former resident of Concord and participant in Rent Review Program

Date: Nov. 26, 2018

Re: City Council Agenda Item assessing the Rent Review Program on 11/27/18

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My name Kevin Michael and I am a former Concord resident. I lived in Concord for over 30 years until recently moving to Sacramento. Before moving to Sacramento, I lived off Basset Drive by Newhall Park with my daughter and son. In the summer of 2017, I received a rent increase of 20%. Every time I received a rent increase, the reason always given to me was that the increasing cost of maintenance.

I however believe this 20% rent increase was a result from the complete and utter disregard for tenants and complete retaliation due to my personal injury premise liability injury claim after being injured on the property.

I went to the City of Concord to file the paperwork I needed to go through the rent mediation program and to go through arbitration. I went through the whole process, with the result of unanimous decision in favor of me, but since the program is nonbinding I still received the rent increase.

I was the first one out of very few people that went through the rent review program. I was the first tenant that went all the way through to arbitration. I am here to say that not only did it not work, it will never work. The landlord property management found a loophole and the city did not hold them accountable.

Did I take this highly personal? Did I feel constantly harassed and abused by the owner? Yes. I injured myself on their property, which is in result was going to cost them a significant amount of money. I stayed on top of all maintenance that needed to be done, that never got done. I should have never had to pay \$1525 for my rent. Even with help from my kids, I couldn't afford it because I live on an extremely fixed income, very limited VA pension. What is happening here is rent gouging.

On top of the rent increases, I dealt with habitability issues. Broken windows, 8 year old carpet, plumbing issues, water heater issues, etc. The landlord would refuse to make the repairs or procrastinate months on making the repairs. My unit was the only unit that had not been remodeled and updated - the other 9 units had been renovated. This is another reason why I believe I was being retaliated against.

I came all the way from Sacramento today to make my voice heard. It's not about me anymore, but now it is about everyone else struggling to stay in Concord, who may not know how to stand up for themselves, or are too scared, or who can't. Not living here anymore will not to stop me from doing what I can to help people here in City of Concord.

There would not be a City of Concord without its people. Corporate landlords in my opinion are not the city's people. Their residents and tenants live in the city, that is the city's responsibility: to take care of and provide for them.

Tenant protections combined with affordable housing would solve a great percentage of the housing crisis. Concord needs just cause for evictions and rent control now.