

Remarks to RENT REVIEW BOARD Regarding Park Owners Changing Ordinance, 11/19/25

Thank you for this opportunity to respond to the request by park owners of Oak Haven, Ojai Valley Estates and El Serano MHP, to modify the Ventura County Rent Control Ordinance to benefit themselves.

I must say that to increase costs on affordable housing at this time when housing costs are front and center for the entire country not just California is, to put it mildly, tone deaf. Mobile home owners are a captive audience—we can't just pick up and move, so we need protection from losing our homes, or the value of our homes, due to rents that surpass our ability to pay.

I would like to respond to each point made in the submitted letters. With regard to:

1. Changing the vacancy decontrol amount from \$72 or 15% to \$112 or 15%.

This seems reasonable to me as long as the decontrol mechanism continues to occur gradually, such as every 4 years.

2. However, the next request would omit the restriction of one decontrol increase every 4 years.

It doesn't say how often decontrol would happen--every 3 years, 2 years, 1 year, anytime?

Affordable housing is one of the biggest problems in California. Decontrolling too often could quickly make homes unaffordable by seniors and others on a fixed income. Also home values would decline. The park owners point out that their parks are so desirable that a home that originally sold for \$100K now goes for \$489K. This is actually true of many of the County's parks. Problem is, this new selling price would still only buy a mobile home in a desirable park. It would not buy a stick-built house in a local neighborhood or even a condo. Mobile home residents are stuck with an out of control market like everyone else.

3. The next request is to implement automatic adjustments such as annual increases indexed to the CPI rather than the current COLA Adjustment, to "prevent further neglect and policy lag".

Indexing annual increases to Social Security/COLA keeps seniors on Social Security from falling too far behind the inflation index. COLA often does not capture the full CPI.

In 2023 I did an analysis of every RSO in California. I discovered that our current Rent Stabilization Ordinance is one of the most advantageous to park owners and least advantageous to residents, with a 2% floor and 8% cap based on COLA. The most common RSO seemed to be no floor and a 5% cap, or a percentage of COLA, where ours is 100% of COLA up to 8%. Don't get me wrong, we are grateful for the help we have. We just don't want to see our benefits reduced.

4. The next request is to change the Ordinance to include capital improvement pass-throughs.

Residents are responsible for repairing and maintaining their homes. They don't get to pass through to park owners the costs for new windows, roofs, gutters, etc. Likewise, infrastructure maintenance is the responsibility of park owners not the residents. Allowing pass-throughs could even create opportunities for fraud and abuse on the part of park owners. This is a recipe for trouble that I ask the Board to reject out of hand.

5. The next item in looking for relief points out that the CPI has risen by 55% between 2007 and 2025.

We know. Residents are subject to the same growing prices as park owners only we have less income to deal with it.

6. Lastly, park owners point out that Insurance costs have gone up.

We know that too. Residents are struggling to pay sharply increased insurance costs, some having to pay to modify or update windows, roofs, or landscaping in order to even get insurance.

Cal Fire has a program called Firewise that encourages mobile home residents to upgrade their homes with fire retardant materials and to trim landscaping to prevent fire. This not only helps residents qualify for insurance, it helps keep the park owners property safe as well. Residents are footing the bills to do this voluntarily. As far as we know no park owners have taken similar steps to fire harden park property. They are not addressing the problem head on the way homeowners have with far more limited resources.

As I said, this is not the time to be making “affordable” housing less so.

Thank you.