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City Council Passes Comprehensive Package in Response to COVID-19 Crisis

Eviction Moratorium Highlights Series of Protections for Vulnerable Residents and Businesses

SAN DIEGO – The San Diego City Council President on Tuesday ratified the Mayor’s state of emergency declaration and passed a comprehensive package of legislation to help lessen the economic and social impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on San Diego’s most at-risk residents.

“The spread of COVID-19 is an unprecedented global healthcare crisis. It’s also a growing economic crisis for residents and businesses across the San Diego region,” said City Council President Georgette Gómez, who proposed each of the 14 items in the package. “The measures we passed today will provide desperately needed relief.”

The centerpiece of the legislative package is a proposal to place a temporary moratorium on residential evictions due to non-payment of rent because of financial hardship caused by the COVID-19 outbreak. After Tuesday’s meeting, Mayor Kevin Faulconer announced his support for an eviction moratorium.

Each of these items will come back to Council for a vote on final implementation.

The full package includes:

1. A temporary moratorium on residential evictions due to non-payment of rent resulting from a loss of wages caused by the outbreak of COVID-19.
2. A temporary moratorium on evictions and mortgage foreclosures for property owned by the San Diego Housing Authority due to non-payment of rent or mortgages resulting from a loss of wages caused by the outbreak.
3. A resolution requesting the San Diego Superior Court to suspend all pending residential eviction cases during the pendency of state of emergency related to the outbreak of COVID-19.
4. A resolution requesting the San Diego County Sheriff suspend service of unlawful detainer actions and enforcement of evictions.
5. A resolution calling on the Department of Homeland Security to suspend immigration enforcement operations in sensitive locations including hospitals, clinics, and other healthcare facilities.

6. A request that San Diego Gas & Electric and any other utility provider to evaluate potential relief from late fees and utility shutoffs.
7. Temporary relief funding for workers who were laid off or furloughed because of the outbreak of COVID-19 to help those workers pay rent and/or utility bills.
8. A temporary moratorium on evictions for small businesses under commercial leases, who cannot pay rent.
9. Evaluation of options to work with banks and lenders to halt mortgage payments or foreclosures for individuals and landlords.
10. Prioritization of requests for emergency funding and support from the state and federal governments.
11. Enforcement the Earned Sick Leave and Minimum Wage Ordinance.
12. A delay on collection and enforcement of the City's Business Tax Certificate fees.
13. Suspension of enforcement of the Vehicle Habitation Ordinance.
14. A request that the Mayor, working with the hotel association, labor partners, and homeless service providers, open hotel rooms that include provider services to unsheltered individuals and families.

The first action taken at the meeting on Tuesday was ratification of the Mayor's March 12 declaration of state of emergency in the City of San Diego. That item passed on a unanimous 9-0 vote.

The second item was the relief package detailed above. Action No. 1 passed unanimously. Actions 2 through 14 passed on an 8-1 vote.

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Council President Gómez represents the Ninth Council District of the City of San Diego, which includes the communities of Alvarado Estates, City Heights, College Area, College View Estates, El Cerrito, Kensington, Mountain View, Mt. Hope, Rolando, Southcrest, and Talmadge. She chairs the City of San Diego Rules Committee and sits on the Metropolitan Transit System Board of Directors and on the SANDAG Board of Directors and Executive Board.