

RE: Proposed spending for housing (PLHA) funds found at this link: <https://sonomacounty.ca.gov/CDC/News/PLHA-Notice/>

Dear Holly and CDC officials:

You should program the bulk of the PLHA funds for rental assistance to low-income tenants who cannot pay their current rent. Loans for development should be eliminated entirely at this time.

The obvious need during COVID-19 crisis and the economic problems it has created is helping people pay rent and stay housed, which also helps preserve quality rental housing and mitigate homelessness, both very important priorities.

The \$674,000 you propose to use for construction might make it possible to build 2 or 3 housing units at some point in 3 or 4 years, depending on how high the community's impact fees are, and how high their planning hurdles are. Most of the money will be absorbed by local fees, inflated construction costs, consultants and/or salaries rather than actually helping people in need.

Rental assistance is very easy to administer. You can get the money out to provide concrete benefit to people in need very quickly. It is the most logical choice for PLHA money, unless there is no waiting list at all for the county's Sec. 8 program; I don't know but I doubt that is the case.

From a political standpoint, I know your agency wishes to address the COVID-19 economic impact by imposing an eviction moratorium or extending the current one. This is a stopgap step at best, and will have unpredictable consequences. Now you have a gift from the state of money to help truly needy tenants pay rent and stay housed, while allowing landlords to keep paying for upkeep, taxes, and service.

Use PLHA money for the greatest need in the most efficient way possible: rental assistance. Thanks for listening.

Andre

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