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Supervisors Oppose Proposed Trump Administration Cuts to Affordable Housing

The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors voted, with one abstention, to send a letter to Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Secretary Ben Carson expressing their “strong opposition” to his proposal to reduce federal housing subsidies to the poor.

Sec. Carson is calling on Congress to pass the *Making Affordable Housing Work Act*, which would triple – to \$150 – the minimum monthly rent that an estimated 175,000 households receiving federal housing subsidies must pay. It would also require about 2 million households in subsidized housing to increase their share of the rent to 35 percent of their adjusted income, up from 30 percent. Finally, the measure would allow public housing authorities to impose work requirements on tenants – up to 32 hours a week.

“If you think homelessness is a problem now, try this on for size,” Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas, lead author of [the motion](#), said of the proposed Act. “This could have a devastating effect on LA County, which already has one of the nation’s least affordable housing markets and, as a result, the largest homeless population.”

“I was dismayed to see the Secretary introduce this, right after a conversation about the responsibility and opportunity that government agencies have to help lift individuals and families out of poverty,” Supervisor Ridley-Thomas added. “There is no question that the current regulations are archaic, but there is simply a better way to approach policy reform, and we should engage accordingly.”

The LA County Community Development Commission analyzed the proposed Act and found that families in public housing would have to spend an average of \$570 towards rent every month – \$104 more than they currently do – if the requirement to pay 35 percent of their income were to be adopted by Congress. Seniors and tenants with severely limited incomes would be most acutely affected by the rent increases.

“This proposal is cruel and frankly unnecessary,” said Supervisor Janice Hahn, the motion’s co-author. “Section 8 units in LA County are home to some of our poorest families and often are the only thing standing between them and homelessness. We need creative solutions for homelessness from our HUD secretary but this proposal is counterproductive and should not be allowed to move forward.”

Section 8 refers to vouchers issued by the federal government to help very low-income families, the elderly, and the disabled afford decent, safe, and sanitary housing.

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