

Good afternoon,

Yesterday the New Orleans City Council Community Development Committee held the first public comment period on the proposed Rental Registry and Inspection Program ordinance. The meeting lasted over three hours with dozens of speakers voicing support and opposition for the measure. I was proud to represent all of you as the voice of NOMAR to let the Council know that this is not the appropriate solution to the problem of blighted and slum rental property. You can [watch my testimony here](#) (begins around 1:38:00) or [read a text of it here](#).

At the conclusion of public comment, each present Councilmember gave his or her thoughts on the issue. Councilmen Head, Gray, and Guidry all expressed displeasure with the ordinance as it is currently drafted. They each named multiple items that need to be addressed, even touching on the fact that this may need to be withdrawn and an alternate solution found. While this is positive news, it is far from over. The ordinance is now going to the full Council for further debate next week.

I urge you to contact the members of the New Orleans Council, as well as the Mayor, to encourage them to find the middle ground on this issue. We can all agree that property that doesn't meet minimum standards should be found in violation of the city's Minimum Property Maintenance Code and the necessary repairs should be made. What we cannot agree on, however, is that this should be done through a mandatory inspection of rental property. Please contact these elected officials and ask them to find a solution that does not involve a mandatory inspection program, but instead authorizes inspections based on reported violations. Please also encourage them to bring back the city-funded position of Housing Advocate. This will allow the city to have staff dedicated to serving as a mediator in disputes between tenants and landlords, as well as other property owners across the city. Please also ask them to find a way to make Code Enforcement function the way it was intended. We heard from many people who say that department isn't doing its job or doesn't have the ability to enforce the building code. If this is true, then it is a problem for all residents and business owners, not just those who rent. You can [find Council contact information here](#) and the [Mayor's contact information here](#).

New Orleans is a city unlike any other and we deserve better than an ordinance copied and pasted from other cities and municipalities. We will continue to work with the Council and Administration to find the "New Orleans" solution. In the meantime, if you have any suggestions on ways to address this issue or if you have questions about the legislation, please reach out to me. You are the housing experts and I would love to hear your thoughts. Together, we can find a solution that will work for ALL of us.

Regards,

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