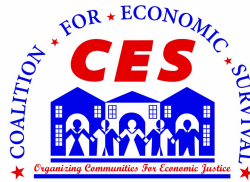




Coalition for Economic Survival

CES in the News



Los Angeles City Council to vote on using ULA funds for wildfire rent relief

The council will vote April 1 on a proposal to use \$15 million from Measure ULA—drawing support and criticism

By **Teresa Liu** - March 31, 2025

Tuesday, April 1, on a proposal to use funding typically reserved for affordable housing to provide emergency rental assistance to renters struggling after the January wildfires.

The proposal would allocate \$15 million from the United to House LA Fund, which voters approved in November 2022 via Measure ULA to support long-term affordable housing programs.

In addition to the emergency relief funds, the motion directs city staff to create a report identifying additional ways that the Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) Program funds could be used.

The proposal was introduced by Councilmembers Bob Blumenfield, Traci Park, John Lee and Heather Hutt.

While supporters say the reallocation is a necessary response to an ongoing crisis, some affordable housing advocates have expressed concern that diverting funds could undermine the long-term goals of the United to House LA initiative.

In a statement on Monday, March 31, Lee said the reallocation is necessary to protect vulnerable tenants and small landlords alike.

"Redirecting existing funds already designated for housing assistance toward emergency rental assistance is a practical and effective way to prevent evictions and not place the burden on mom and pop rental providers who often carry the financial burden in the wake of disasters," he said.

Lee added: "I fully support this reallocation as a logical step to keep our communities stable and help residents recover."

Meanwhile, Larry Gross, executive director of the [Coalition for Economic Survival](#), a grassroots organization that advocates for tenants' rights and economic justice for low- and moderate- income residents in Los Angeles, said he has "mixed feelings" on the proposal.

Gross voiced support for helping wildfire victims but he raised concerns about the source of the proposed funding.

"They're going to the well, which was set up to provide funding for the development of new affordable housing that's desperately needed, provide income support for the most vulnerable, eviction protections and rental assistance for thousands of Angelenos that needed it prior to the wildfire," Gross said.

Gross also raised concerns about the proposal's backers, noting that several of the same council members had previously opposed efforts to enact an eviction and rent increase moratorium for residents impacted by the wildfires.

That separate proposal—introduced by council members Eunisses Hernandez and Hugo Soto-Martinez—sought to provide eviction protections for workers like nannies, gardeners, and others who faced economic hardship following the January fires.

After multiple delays, the City Council ultimately voted it down in early March.

"If the concern was so great for some of these council members, not all of them, but some of them, why didn't they support the moratoriums on evictions and rent increases for wildfire victims?" Gross said.

The reallocation also faces opposition from United to House LA, the coalition that led the campaign to pass Measure ULA.

Joe Donlin, the coalition's director, said the group does not support the current approach because it would divert essential administrative funds, trigger a complex revision process, and potentially put the city out of compliance with the ordinance.

Instead, the coalition supports "an alternative proposal to update eligibility requirements for the \$14.6 million allocated to the ULA Income Support program in order to support people impacted by the wildfires," Donlin said.

Measure ULA generates hundreds of millions of dollars annually for the City of Los Angeles by increasing tax on the sale of properties valued at \$5 million or more.

According to the city, 70% of ULA funds go toward the Affordable Housing Program, which supports the construction, rehabilitation, and preservation of affordable housing. The remaining 30% supports the Homelessness Prevention Program, which focuses on stabilizing low-income tenants and preventing displacement.

The ballot measure went into effect on January 1, 2023, and supporters are marking the second anniversary of its implementation on Tuesday, Donlin said.



BYO-fridge? New bill aims to ban LA's refrigerator-less apartments

By [David Wagner](#) - Mar 31, 2025

The days of hunting for an apartment in Los Angeles and finding that many come without a refrigerator could soon come to an end.

A new bill in the California Legislature aims to require landlords to provide stoves and fridges in rental housing.

Fridge-less apartments have long been a weird quirk of renting in Southern California. Current state law does not require units to include a refrigerator, and the expectation that renters will pay for their own fridge has taken root in L.A.'s housing market.



According to a 2022 Los Angeles Times story that investigated this issue, L.A. and Orange Counties have the fewest number of units with refrigerators among large urban areas across the country.

Bring your own

Missing fridges are a frequent source of confusion among L.A. apartment hunters. Social media is full of posts and videos from baffled renters, especially those moving here from other parts of the country where refrigerators are standard (and legally required).

"You just assume when you are a tenant that you're going to have these basic appliances," said Sarah Fraser, a podcast host who moved to L.A. from Washington, D.C., three years ago.

Fraser said while touring apartments with her husband and infant son, she found that about half of the units came without a fridge.

"I had no idea that it was a thing," she said. "The first thing we noticed was just the lack of refrigerators... You would walk into the unit and they were like, 'Yeah, you're responsible to get a refrigerator and then remove it when you leave.' We were like, what?"

Should high move-in costs guarantee a fridge and stove?

State Assemblymember Tina McKinnor, a Democrat representing Inglewood, recently introduced Assembly Bill 628. If passed, the legislation would require California landlords to provide stoves and refrigerators for all apartment leases after Jan. 1, 2026.

In an interview with LAist, McKinnor said apartments in her district often require monthly rents between \$3,000 and \$4,000, plus an equivalent security deposit.

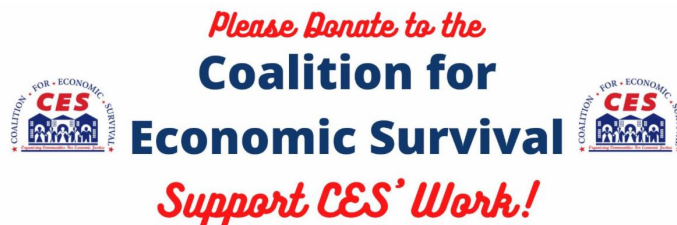
"When we're paying \$6,000 to \$8,000 to move in to rent an apartment, the landlords can provide the necessity of a stove and refrigerator," she said. "I think it's fair."

With food costs rising, tenant groups say fridges are essential. For more typical L.A. apartments, renter advocates argue it's unfair for landlords to make tenants buy and maintain basic kitchen appliances — or go without them entirely.

"It's become prohibitive for many people, families and seniors on fixed incomes to eat out at restaurants," said Larry Gross, executive director of the [Coalition for Economic Survival](#).

"These appliances are not amenities," he said. "They're a necessary part of a home. Without them, it places additional financial strain on renters."

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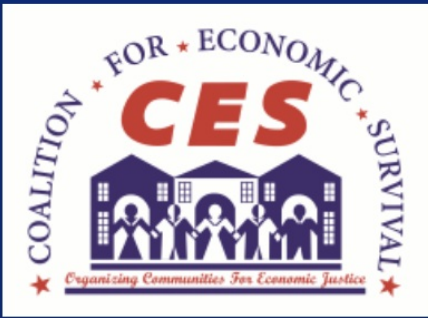


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