

Written Public Comment submitted by Suzanne Dershowitz

Public Advocates writes to recommend that the full Farmworker Advisory Commission support a strong San Mateo County Tenant Protection Ordinance. Tenant protection policies are a powerful tool to prevent displacement and homelessness.

Implementing strong local tenant protections, like just cause for eviction protections, will also help the county to comply with the Housing Element's Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH) requirements, which require the county to promote policies meeting the special needs of a range of groups, including extremely low-income households, large families, those with disabilities, and farmworkers.

Under the draft ordinance provided in advance of the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors' July study session, farmworkers who live in most forms of private, market-rate housing would be protected from unjust, arbitrary evictions.

As the ordinance is being revised, it is important for the Farmworker Advisory Commission to let the Board know what type of tenant protection issues they should address and what forms of housing should be covered under the policy to protect farmworkers who live in San Mateo County.

Local tenant protection policies are critical to stop unfair, arbitrary evictions. State law is insufficient to keep tenants stably housed, and many other local jurisdictions in the Bay Area and in the region have already advanced and implemented the protections that the Board is now considering.