LWV **LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS**
of the Los Altos-Mountain View Area

February 20, 2018

Chair Hehmeyer and Members of the Environmental Planning Commission
City of Mountain View
500 Castro Street
Mountain View 94041

EPC Meeting, Feb. 20, Agenda Item # 5.1 - Amendments to Tenant Relocation Assistance Ordinance (TRAO)

Dear Chair Hehmeyer and Members of the EPC:

The LWV supports affordable housing for all Californians. We also support policies to provide a decent home and suitable living environments for every American family. For these reasons, the LWV has supported tenant relocation benefits in the past as a reasonable way to help displaced tenants. Once again, we commend staff for its thorough analysis of a very complicated issue that needs to take into account the TRAO, CSFRA, and the Ellis Act.

We support the staff recommendations relating to the first 4 questions. We are particularly interested in seeing TRAO apply to all tenants whose incomes do not exceed 120% area median income (AMI). Staff is correct in pointing out that in years past, moderate-income households typically could find market-rate housing in the area, but in the last few years rents have risen enormously, so this is no longer true. Therefore, providing these households with TRAO seems reasonable.

With respect to Question 5, we agree with the Rental Housing Committee (RHC) recommendations with one exception. The RHC believed that it would be very unusual for a tenant to activate his First Right of Return after 5 years, when the rent for the unit would not be subject to vacancy control. Nonetheless, in order to protect this First Right of Return, even if is rarely used, we believe that there should be a small penalty to landlords who do not advise their tenants that their units have been returned to the market, or these landlords will likely never send notices to these former tenants.

Thank you for considering our input.

Donna Yobs
Co-Chair, Housing Committee
LWV of the Los Altos/Mountain View Area

cc. Jannie Quinn   Anky van Deursen