



# MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS

LOS ANGELES CITY COUNCILMEMBER

— DISTRICT 10 —

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## City Council Votes to Explore a “Right to Housing”

In an effort to continue to push forward a framework that prioritizes preventing and ending homelessness, today, the Los Angeles City Council has voted to examine how the City would go about establishing a [Right to Housing](#). Pursuant to the adoption of a [motion](#) authored by Councilmember Mark Ridley-Thomas, multiple Los Angeles City departments in consultation with community stakeholders, will now craft a report-back with recommendations to envision, develop, and implement a legislative, budgetary, and policy framework that would require the government to provide a robust and responsive spectrum of solutions to prevent and address homelessness.

“I applaud my fellow Councilmembers for voting to invest in reimagining a pathway to solving our homelessness crisis at a broader and more impactful scale. A Right to Housing means creating a housing safety net that obligates the government to not only aid Angelenos off the streets and into interim and permanent housing, but also prevent homelessness in the first place,” said Councilmember Ridley-Thomas. “Just like our rights to clean air, our right to vote, and our right to receive an education - it should be mandatory for LA City to provide a Right to Housing to its residents.”

“Today’s action instructs City departments to develop a citywide framework to establish a Right to Housing. The status quo on our approach to keeping people housed no longer works as is evidenced by our homelessness and affordability crisis. We need to not only drastically increase our housing stock, but align our housing efforts with our legislative priorities. The motion I co-authored with Councilmember Ridley-Thomas takes an

important step forward and will provide this Council with tools to improve housing for all Angelenos,” said Councilmember Mitch O’Farrell.

City and County data shows that despite an average of 207 people exiting homelessness every day, another 227 people fall into homelessness that same day. Even though the current system helped to house more than 22,000 people in 2019, move more than 5,000 unhoused residents into hotel rooms through Project Roomkey, and create housing stability for close to 50,000 low-income households through rent subsidies during the COVID-19 pandemic, the scale of the crisis is such that the current system is insufficient to counter the continued inflow of people becoming homeless.

The City of Los Angeles will now begin the work of identifying resources, and proposing a strategy and timeline to implement and establish a Right to Housing framework. This process will proceed in consultation with a diversity of community stakeholders, including but not limited to community-based organizations and nonprofits, legal advocates, tenants and people with lived experience with homelessness, faith communities, academia, philanthropy, business and other government entities such as LA County.

“Housing, unlike education and healthcare, is one of the few public goods that we treat as a commodity, rather than a basic human necessity. A Right to Housing framework would move the city toward providing the necessary infrastructure and resources to provide a roof over the head of every Angeleno. We thank Councilman Ridley-Thomas for his leadership on this critical issue and we look forward to working with his office on urgent solutions to the homelessness crisis,” said Los Angeles Business Council President, Mary Leslie.

“The only way to tackle the homeless crisis is to address the foundational problems that have caused black and brown people, and other marginalized groups, to be systematically excluded from opportunities to live in safe and affordable housing. This motion, presented by Councilmembers Mark Ridley-Thomas and Mitch O’Farrell, would establish a Right to Housing and is one important step toward correcting this imbalance,” said Va Lecia Adams Kellum, Ph.D. President & CEO of St. Joseph Center.

“We have much work to do, and we must be all-in to ensure that all who call Los Angeles home are able to achieve lives of dignity and worth. I look forward to the work ahead,” said Councilmember Ridley-Thomas.

This action comes after the City Council has voted to [reimagine](#) public safety and service delivery for communities of color in response to the widespread protest against violent and unjust treatment by law enforcement. In Council District 10, [more than \\$3M](#) in investments have been allocated to address homelessness. And last week, pursuant to a motion from Councilmember Ridley-Thomas, the City Council [voted to support AB 71](#), which would provide \$2.4B annually statewide to fund services and housing for unhoused Californians.

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