

## Senate Bill No. 538

### CHAPTER 255

An act to amend Sections 65863.10 and 65863.13 of the Government Code, relating to housing.

[Approved by Governor September 1, 2003. Filed with Secretary of State September 2, 2003.]

#### LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 538, Torlakson. Housing: tenants: notices.

Existing law requires, prior to the anticipated date of the termination of a subsidy contract, expiration of rental restrictions, or prepayment on an assisted housing development, that the owner proposing the termination or prepayment of governmental assistance or the owner of an assisted housing development in which there will be the expiration of rental restrictions provide a notice of the proposed change to each affected tenant household residing in the assisted housing development and to the affected public entities.

This bill would additionally require that those notices be given to prospective tenants, as prescribed.

Existing law exempts an owner from the notice requirement if, upon prepayment, prescribed conditions are contained in a regulatory agreement with a governmental agency, as defined.

This bill would include in the definition of a regulatory agreement the requirement that it obligates the owner and any successors to maintain the affordability of the housing for a specified period.

*The people of the State of California do enact as follows:*

SECTION 1. Section 65863.10 of the Government Code is amended to read:

65863.10. (a) As used in this section, the following terms have the following meaning:

(1) "Affected public entities" means the mayor of the city in which the assisted housing development is located, or, if located in an unincorporated area, the chair of the board of supervisors of the county; the appropriate local public housing authority, if any; and the Department of Housing and Community Development.

(2) "Affected tenant" means a tenant household residing in an assisted housing development, as defined in paragraph (3), at the time



notice is required to be provided pursuant to this section, that benefits from the government assistance.

(3) “Assisted housing development” means a multifamily rental housing development that receives governmental assistance under any of the following federal programs:

(A) New construction, substantial rehabilitation, moderate rehabilitation, property disposition, and loan management set-aside programs, or any other program providing project-based assistance, under Section 8 of the United States Housing Act of 1937, as amended (42 U.S.C. Sec. 1437f).

(B) The following federal programs:

(i) The Below-Market-Interest-Rate Program under Section 221(d)(3) of the National Housing Act (12 U.S.C. Sec. 1715l(d)(3) and (5)).

(ii) Section 236 of the National Housing Act (12 U.S.C. Sec. 1715z-1).

(iii) Section 202 of the Housing Act of 1959 (12 U.S.C. Sec. 1701q).

(C) Programs for rent supplement assistance under Section 101 of the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1965, as amended (12 U.S.C. Sec. 1701s).

(D) Programs under Section 515 of the Housing Act of 1949, as amended (42 U.S.C. Sec. 1485).

(E) Section 42 of the Internal Revenue Code.

(4) “City” means a general law city, a charter city, or a city and county.

(5) “Expiration of rental restrictions” means the expiration of rental restrictions for an assisted housing development described in subparagraph (E) of paragraph (3) unless the development has other recorded agreements restricting the rent to the same or lesser levels for at least 50 percent of the units.

(6) “Prepayment” means the payment in full or refinancing of the federally insured or federally held mortgage indebtedness prior to its original maturity date, or the voluntary cancellation of mortgage insurance, on an assisted housing development described in subparagraph (B) of paragraph (3) that would have the effect of removing the current low-income affordability restrictions contained in the applicable laws and the regulatory agreement.

(7) “Termination” means an owner’s decision not to extend or renew its participation in a federal subsidy program for an assisted housing development described in subparagraph (A) of paragraph (3), either at or prior to the scheduled date of the expiration of the contract, that may result in an increase in tenant rents or a change in the form of the subsidy from project-based to tenant-based.



(b) (1) At least 12 months prior to the anticipated date of the termination of a subsidy contract, expiration of rental restrictions, or prepayment on an assisted housing development, the owner proposing the termination or prepayment of governmental assistance or the owner of an assisted housing development in which there will be the expiration of rental restrictions shall provide a notice of the proposed change to each affected tenant household residing in the assisted housing development at the time the notice is provided and to the affected public entities. An owner who meets the requirements of Section 65863.13 shall be exempt from providing that notice. The notice shall contain all of the following:

(A) In the event of termination, a statement that the owner intends to terminate the subsidy contract or rental restrictions upon its expiration date, or the expiration date of any contract extension thereto.

(B) In the event of the expiration of rental restrictions, a statement that the restrictions will expire and whether the owner intends to increase rents greater than permitted under Section 42 of the Internal Revenue Code.

(C) In the event of prepayment, a statement that the owner intends to pay in full or refinance the federally insured or federally held mortgage indebtedness prior to its original maturity date, or voluntarily cancel the mortgage insurance.

(D) The anticipated date of the termination, prepayment of the federal program or expiration of rental restrictions, and the identity of the federal program described in subdivision (a).

(E) A statement that the proposed change would have the effect of removing the current low-income affordability restrictions in the applicable contract or regulatory agreement.

(F) A statement of the possibility that the housing may remain in the federal program after the proposed date of termination of the subsidy contract or prepayment if the owner elects to do so under the terms of the federal government's offer.

(G) A statement that other governmental assistance may be provided to tenants residing in the development at the time of the termination of the subsidy contract or prepayment.

(H) A statement that a subsequent notice of the proposed change, including anticipated changes in rents, if any, for the development, will be provided at least six months prior to the anticipated date of termination of the subsidy contract, or expiration of rental restrictions, or prepayment.

(I) A statement of notice of opportunity to submit an offer to purchase, as required in Section 65863.11.



(2) Notwithstanding paragraph (1), if an owner provides a copy of a federally required notice of termination of a subsidy contract or prepayment at least 12 months prior to the proposed change to each affected tenant household residing in the assisted housing development at the time the notice is provided and to the affected public entities, the owner shall be deemed in compliance with this subdivision, if the notice is in compliance with all federal laws. However, the federally required notice does not satisfy the requirements of Section 65863.11.

(c) (1) At least six months prior to the anticipated date of termination of a subsidy contract, expiration of rental restrictions or prepayment on an assisted housing development, the owner proposing the termination or prepayment of governmental assistance or the owner of an assisted housing development in which there will be the expiration of rental restrictions under Section 42 of the Internal Revenue Code shall provide a notice of the proposed change to each affected tenant household residing in the assisted housing development at the time the notice is provided and to the affected public entities. An owner who meets the requirements of Section 65863.13 shall be exempt from providing that notice.

(2) The notice to the tenants shall contain all of the following:

(A) The anticipated date of the termination or prepayment of the federal program, or expiration of rental restrictions, and the identity of the federal program, as described in subdivision (a).

(B) The current rent and anticipated new rent for the unit on the date of the prepayment or termination of the federal program, or expiration of rental restrictions.

(C) A statement that a copy of the notice will be sent to the city, county, or city and county, where the assisted housing development is located, to the appropriate local public housing authority, if any, and to the Department of Housing and Community Development.

(D) A statement of the possibility that the housing may remain in the federal program after the proposed date of subsidy termination or prepayment if the owner elects to do so under the terms of the federal government's offer or that a rent increase may not take place due to the expiration of rental restrictions.

(E) A statement of the owner's intention to participate in any current replacement federal subsidy program made available to the affected tenants.

(F) The name and telephone number of the city, county, or city and county, the appropriate local public housing authority, if any, the Department of Housing and Community Development, and a legal services organization, that can be contacted to request additional written



information about an owner's responsibilities and the rights and options of an affected tenant.

(3) In addition to the information provided in the notice to the affected tenant, the notice to the affected public entities shall contain information regarding the number of affected tenants in the project, the number of units that are government assisted and the type of assistance, the number of the units that are not government assisted, the number of bedrooms in each unit that is government assisted, and the ages and income of the affected tenants. The notice shall briefly describe the owner's plans for the project, including any timetables or deadlines for actions to be taken and specific governmental approvals that are required to be obtained, the reason the owner seeks to terminate the subsidy contract or prepay the mortgage, and any contacts the owner has made or is making with other governmental agencies or other interested parties in connection with the notice. The owner shall also attach a copy of any federally required notice of the termination of the subsidy contract or prepayment that was provided at least six months prior to the proposed change. The information contained in the notice shall be based on data that is reasonably available from existing written tenant and project records.

(d) The owner proposing the termination or prepayment of governmental assistance or the owner of an assisted housing development in which there will be the expiration of rental restrictions under Section 42 of the Internal Revenue Code shall provide additional notice of any significant changes to the notice required by subdivision (c) within seven business days to each affected tenant household residing in the assisted housing development at the time the notice is provided and to the affected public entities. "Significant changes" shall include, but not be limited to, any changes to the date of termination or prepayment, or expiration of rental restrictions or the anticipated new rent.

(e) An owner who is subject to the requirements of this section shall also provide a copy of any notices issued to existing tenants pursuant to subdivision (b), (c), or (d) to any prospective tenant at the time he or she is interviewed for eligibility.

(f) This section shall not require the owner to obtain or acquire additional information that is not contained in the existing tenant and project records, or to update any information in his or her records. The owner shall not be held liable for any inaccuracies contained in these records or from other sources, nor shall the owner be liable to any party for providing this information.

(g) For purposes of this section, service of the notice to the affected tenants, the city, county, or city and county, the appropriate local public housing authority, if any, and the Department of Housing and



Community Development by the owner pursuant to subdivisions (b) to (e), inclusive, shall be made by first-class mail postage prepaid.

(h) Nothing in this section shall enlarge or diminish the authority, if any, that a city, county, city and county, affected tenant, or owner may have, independent of this section.

(i) If, prior to January 1, 2001, the owner has already accepted a bona fide offer from a qualified entity, as defined in subdivision (c) of Section 65863.11, and has complied with this section as it existed prior to January 1, 2001, at the time the owner decides to sell or otherwise dispose of the development, the owner shall be deemed in compliance with this section.

(j) Injunctive relief shall be available to any party identified in paragraph (1) or (2) of subdivision (a) who is aggrieved by a violation of this section.

(k) The Director of Housing and Community Development shall approve forms to be used by owners to comply with subdivisions (b) and (c). Once the director has approved the forms, an owner shall use the approved forms to comply with subdivisions (b) and (c).

(l) This section shall remain in effect only until January 1, 2011, and as of that date is repealed, unless a later enacted statute, which is enacted on or before January 1, 2011, deletes or extends that date.

SEC. 2. Section 65863.13 of the Government Code is amended to read:

65863.13. (a) An owner shall not be required to provide a notice prior to prepayment as required by Section 65863.10 if, upon prepayment, all of the following conditions are contained in a regulatory agreement that has been recorded against the property:

(1) No tenant who resides in the development on the effective date of prepayment shall be involuntarily displaced on a permanent basis as a result of the prepayment, unless the tenant has breached the terms of the lease.

(2) The owner shall accept and fully utilize all renewals of project-based assistance under Section 8 of the United States Housing Act of 1937, if available, and if that assistance is at a level to maintain the project's fiscal viability. The property shall be deemed fiscally viable if the rents permitted under the terms of the assistance are not less than the regulated rent levels established pursuant to subparagraph (A) of paragraph (6).

(3) The owner shall accept all enhanced Section 8 vouchers, if the tenants receive them, and all other Section 8 vouchers for future vacancies.

(4) The owner shall not terminate a tenancy at the end of a lease term without demonstrating a breach of the lease.



(5) The owner may, in selecting eligible applicants for admission, utilize criteria that permit consideration of the amount of income, as long as the owner adequately considers other factors relevant to an applicant's ability to pay rent.

(6) (A) For units that have project-based Section 8 assistance upon the effective date of prepayment and subsequently become unassisted by any form of Section 8 assistance, rents shall not exceed 30 percent of 60 percent of the area median income. If any form of Section 8 assistance is or becomes available, rent and occupancy levels shall be set in accordance with federal regulations for the Section 8 program.

(B) For unassisted units and units that do not have project-based Section 8 assistance upon the effective date of prepayment and subsequently remain unassisted or become unassisted by any form of Section 8 assistance, rents shall not exceed the greater of (i) 30 percent of 50 percent of the area median income, or (ii) for projects insured under Section 241(f) of the National Housing Act, the regulated rents, expressed as a percentage of area median income. If any form of Section 8 assistance is or becomes available, rent and occupancy levels will be set in accordance with federal regulations governing the Section 8 program.

(b) As used in this section, "regulatory agreement" means an agreement with a governmental agency for the purposes of any governmental program, which agreement applies to the development that would be subject to the notice requirement in Section 65863.10 and which obligates the owner and any successors in interest to maintain the affordability of the assisted housing development for households of very low, low, or moderate income for the greater of the remaining term of the existing federal government assistance specified in subdivision (a) of Section 65863.10 or 30 years.

(c) Section 65863.11 shall not apply to any development for which the owner is exempt from the notice requirements of Section 65863.10 pursuant to this section.

(d) This section shall remain in effect only until January 1, 2011, and as of that date is repealed, unless a later enacted statute, that is enacted before January 1, 2011, deletes or extends that date.

