

Contact:
Joshua Howard
jhoward@caanet.org

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**SANTA ANA FOR FAIR & EQUITABLE HOUSING ENDS EFFORT
FOR REFERENDUM ON SANTA ANA RENT CONTROL ORDINANCE**

SANTA ANA – Santa Ana for Fair & Equitable Housing (SAFE Housing) has ended its effort to gather signatures for a referendum on Santa Ana’s rent control ordinance.

“We believed in the democratic process of letting Santa Ana voters make an informed decision about the policy that the City Council passed in the middle of the night,” said Victor Cao, a spokesperson for SAFE Housing “However, we have ended our effort and will not be submitting signatures that we have gathered.”

“The City Council has enacted an extreme policy that will end up hurting the families it is intended to benefit,” said Cao. “It will result in less affordable housing for the people who need it the most and sends a strong signal to housing developers not to build in Santa Ana.”

“What is ironic is that in 2018 and 2020, proponents for rent control said in their campaign materials to ‘Let voters decide the future of Rent Control in Santa Ana,’ continued Cao. “And yet this year they opposed letting citizens decide its fate. Instead, they engaged in harassment of voters and canvassers, and numerous other violations of state and local campaign and ethics laws that will be detailed in the weeks ahead.”

The group is reviewing multiple complaints about the role of city council members and the City. They include voter intimidation, Brown Act violations by City Council members when drafting the ordinance and use of the city’s official resources for campaigning.

Examples Cao cited were an unsolicited text message sent by the city to voters with a campaign style message and City Council Member Jessie Lopez confronting voters and petition gatherers in City of Santa Ana official clothing rather than campaign attire.

The petition for the referendum would have needed 12,548 signatures, 10% of the city’s 125,479 total registered voters.

About SAFE Housing

Santa Ana for Fair & Equitable Housing is a coalition of Santa Ana housing providers and housing advocates led by the California Apartment Association and other housing organizations in Orange County. SAFE Housing is committed to reasonable solutions to our housing crisis without placing extreme burdens on housing providers or taxpayers.

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