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YES ON ULA TO REAL ESTATE INDUSTRY: STOP TELLING THE IMPOSSIBLE LIE ABOUT PROMISE OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION

As real estate interests approach \$7 million in expenditures against Measure ULA, advocates for strong renter protections and affordable housing creation picket and call on them to tell the real truth about the measure

PHOTOS AND B-ROLL [AVAILABLE](#) (more upon request)

LOS ANGELES — Members of the 230-organization strong coalition backing Measure ULA picketed the California Association of Realtors, demanding that they and other real estate interests stop funding dishonest opposition to the measure, which appears on the November 8th ballot.

These corporate interests have poured more than \$6.6 million into stopping Measure ULA, which would raise a permanent revenue stream to create affordable housing and protect vulnerable renters.

Their primary argument has been to inaccurately, and dishonestly, declare the ballot measure to be a “property tax,” when in fact it is funded by a one-time transfer tax on real

estate sales of \$5 million and more. Saying that ULA will raise property taxes is **the impossible lie**: raising property taxes by local government action, including local ballot initiative, has been unconstitutional since the passage of Proposition 13 in 1978. The California Association of Realtors was one of the chief proponents of Proposition 13.

“This is probably the most significant thing that Los Angeles voters can do to end homelessness, prevent homelessness, and preserve existing affordable housing,” said **Los Angeles City Councilmember Mike Bonin**. “It’s a smart measure that would give people the tools to create affordable housing quickly and provide services to help seniors and folks with disabilities, all for a fee on property sales that is less than what the realtor will make.”

“This impossible lie is disrespectful of the voters of Los Angeles,” said **Daniel Tabor, President of MOVE-LA**, a community organization that is supporting Measure ULA. “We need ULA. People selling properties for \$5 million can afford a 4% transfer tax, and people selling for \$10 million can afford a 5.5% transfer tax. Let’s fund affordable housing, tenant services, and homeless services now.”

The campaign opposing Measure ULA is funded by:

...the **California Association of Realtors**, who earlier this month apologized for a history of opposing affordable housing and dedicated grant funding to closing cost assistance for Black and Brown communities — all while pouring hundreds of thousands of dollars into continuing to oppose ULA, which would build 26,000 units of affordable housing in 10 years and **provide down payment assistance at least 70 times greater than the assistance being provided by CAR**

...**Westfield Properties**, which has contributed \$500,000, a division of international conglomerate Uniball-Rodamco-Westfield, has [announced](#) its intention to sell its Los Angeles properties in the coming years. Using the reported \$363/sq.ft. sale price of its Santa Anita mall, Measure ULA researchers estimate that its Topanga and Century City malls would generate a combined **\$69 million that could result in thousands of units of affordable housing.**

...the **California Business Roundtable Issues PAC**, which has poured nearly \$4 Million into opposing ULA. This PAC receives major funding from Douglas Emmett, a corporate landlord that is [fighting fire safety regulations](#); developer and Trump fundraiser Geoffrey Palmer, who has sued the City of Los Angeles to evade affordable housing requirements; and private equity and residential landlord **Blackstone**, which the [Anti-Eviction Mapping Project](#) has identified as owning nearly 900 single family rental units in the City of Los Angeles, the majority in South LA. Measure ULA would provide tenant protections for these vulnerable renters. Blackstone is notable for converting foreclosed homes into rental properties, harassing renters, and rent gouging. Its practices were [criticized at length](#) in a United Nations report.

...**New Majority PAC**, an exclusively Republican PAC that helped elect Mitch McConnell and receives significant funding from Kilroy Realty.

The campaign is directed by the former head lobbyist for Big Tobacco giant Philip Morris (now Altria).

“The people who make Los Angeles work can no longer afford to live here — that’s not economically sustainable, and it’s not right,” said **Roxana Tynan, executive director of Los Angeles Alliance for a New Economy (LAANE)**. “We need to pass Measure ULA to make sure that our workers can afford to live in the city where they work.”

This opposition comes as homelessness and the housing crisis reach catastrophic levels, especially among seniors. Adults 55 or older are the fastest-growing demographic of people experiencing homelessness in Los Angeles County. Seniors make up nearly a quarter of the county’s unhoused population. Homelessness among those aged 70-79 rose a staggering 49% according to the latest LAHSA Point in Time count.

Measure ULA offers the tools that could help reverse this pattern through direct cash payments, purchase and construction of new affordable units, and increased tenant services.

In total, Measure ULA is estimated to raise approximately \$900 million per year through a real estate transfer tax on sales of properties over \$5 million, funds that could be used for direct rental assistance to low-income seniors, purchase of hotels for transitional housing, and legal assistance for tenants threatened with eviction. It would affect roughly 4% of annual sales in the City of Los Angeles.

Measure ULA would:

- Invest in innovative solutions that will create housing faster and at a lower cost than what has been tried before
- Provide income assistance to low-income seniors and people with disabilities who are at risk of homelessness, and provide legal aid and outreach services to renters at risk of losing their homes — assisting 475,000 Angelenos each year
- Immediately buy existing and build new affordable housing for 69,000 people (in the first ten years) experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness
- Leverage real estate transactions of \$5 million or more so that only millionaires and billionaires pay

It also includes the most robust citizens oversight and transparency in LA City history; the fund would be overseen by a Citizens Committee with specific expertise and lived experience on housing and homelessness & supported by paid staff led by an Inspector General.

“Measure ULA is the best chance in a generation to create affordable housing and prevent more homelessness, and you only have to look at the opposition funders to know why they want to stop it,” said **Eli Lipmen** of MOVE-LA. “All they can do is tell whoppers.”

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About the United to House LA Coalition

Not-for-profit neighborhood organizations, labor unions, and community members who live in Los Angeles have come together, with the assistance of homeless service providers — not politicians — to support a ballot initiative that will ask millionaires and billionaires to pay their fair share to dramatically reduce homelessness and help those at risk of homelessness with tenant protections, assistance for people facing evictions, emergency income assistance to seniors, and housing for veterans and families in need. Our growing coalition ([full list here](#)) includes:

- *ACLU of Southern California*
- *ACCE*
- *ACT-LA*
- *Dolores Huerta Foundation*
- *Downtown Women's Center*
- *LA CAN*
- *LA County Democratic Party*
- *LA Family Housing*
- *LA/OC Building and Construction Trades Council*
- *Move LA*
- *PATH*
- *SAJE*
- *SEIU 2015*
- *Southern California Association of Nonprofit Housing*
- *Southwest Conference of Carpenters*
- *Sunrise Movement Los Angeles*
- *UNITE HERE Local 11*
- *United Way*