

May 2, 2019

Via Online Position Letter Portal: <https://sapro.senate.ca.gov/>

The Honorable Anthony J. Portantino
Chair, Senate Committee on Appropriation
State Capitol, Room 2206
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Support – SB 529 (Durazo)

Dear Chair Portantino & Committee Members:

On behalf of _____, I write in support of SB 529 (Durazo), a bill that would provide crucial protections for vulnerable tenants.

[insert description of your organization]

Much as a labor union is key to winning fair treatment of workers, a tenant association is a crucial part of balancing power between landlord and tenants. Acting together, tenants can gain bargaining power, but too often tenants who organize with their neighbors frequently face retaliation and eviction. California renters deserve the option of a union at work and the protection of a union at home.

SB 529 recognizes the right to form a tenant association and extends crucial protections to tenant association members. Specifically, the bill provides that any tenant who forms or joins a tenant association shall have the following rights:

- No eviction of the tenants in the tenant association except for cause
- A right to engage in rent strike – landlord must bargain in good faith about grievances and may not evict for nonpayment during the negotiation period
- Five times current penalties for retaliation or violation of this law

The bill provides essential protections for tenants to prevent retaliation for organizing activities. We request your support for this bill. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

cc: Bethany.Renfree@sen.ca.gov; Dean@tenantstogether.org