



TO: Elizabeth Pauli, City Manager
FROM: Susan D. Haigh, Interim City Clerk, City Attorney’s Office
 Bill Fosbre, City Attorney
COPY: City Council and City Clerk
SUBJECT: Resolution – Transmitting the Landlord Fairness Act: A Tenant Bill of Rights initiative
 petition – July 11, 2023
DATE: June 27, 2023

SUMMARY AND PURPOSE:

A resolution transmitting a ballot measure to the Pierce County Auditor to be placed on the ballot for the General Election on Tuesday, November 7, 2023, which reads:

**CITY OF TACOMA
 CITIZENS’ INITIATIVE MEASURE NO. 1**

Citizens’ Initiative Measure No. 1 concerns enacting rental requirements for landlords and rental rights for tenants.

This measure would require landlords to comply with health and safety laws before raising rent or evicting a tenant; set limits on certain rental fees; require landlords provide two notices to increase rent and offer relocation assistance when the increase is 5% or more; create a defense against certain student/schoolyear evictions, evictions between November 1 and April 1, and evictions against servicemembers, seniors, families and others with protected status under the measure; and provide penalties and enforcement mechanisms.

Should this measure be enacted into law?

Yes

No

BACKGROUND:

An initiative petition to enact rental requirements for landlords and rental rights for tenants was submitted to the City Clerk’s Office on June 16, 2023. Pursuant to Section 2.19(i) of the City Charter, petitions for the enactment of an ordinance must be signed by registered voters equal in number to at least 10 percent of the total votes cast in the last preceding mayoral election. For this petition, the number of valid signatures required was determined by the Pierce County Auditor to be 4,207. The petitioners submitted a total of 1,232 pages of signatures to the City Clerk.

On June 23, 2023, the Pierce County Auditor’s Office completed checking the pages submitted and determined that the petition contained 4,523 valid signatures.

Section 2.19(j) of the City Charter states in part that once a petition is validated, the City Council may enact or reject the initiative, but shall not modify it. If the Council rejects the initiative or within 30 calendar days fails to take final action on it, the City Council shall submit the proposal to the people at the next Municipal or General Election that is not less than 90 days after the date on which the signatures on the petition are validated.

The deadline for the City Council to place the issue on the November 7, 2023, ballot is August 1, 2023.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT/ CUSTOMER RESEARCH:

The Tacoma For All community group has taken the lead on writing and campaigning for this Initiative.

2025 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

Equity and Accessibility: (Mandatory)

The Tacoma For All community group maintains that this initiative will protect tenants in our city. With the City Council forwarding this initiative to the voters in November, the community will be able to vote on whether they believe this initiative should become law.

Civic Engagement: *Equity Index Score:* Moderate Opportunity

Increase the number of residents who participate civically through volunteering and voting.

ALTERNATIVES:

Presumably, your recommendation is not the only potential course of action; please discuss other alternatives or actions that City Council or staff could take. Please use table below.

Alternative(s)	Positive Impact(s)	Negative Impact(s)
1. Council would accept the Initiative	This would allow this Initiative to quickly become law.	This would mean voters would not have an opportunity to vote on the Initiative.

EVALUATION AND FOLLOW UP:

After consideration of this resolution, the City Clerk’s Office will seek volunteers to serve on committees to prepare statements “for” and “against” the ballot measure.

STAFF/SPONSOR RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the City Council transmit the ballot title to the Pierce County Auditor requesting placement on the November 7, 2023, General Election.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There may be fiscal impact related to election costs.

ATTACHMENTS:

None.