

## **Resolution: King County Needs Rent Control**

WHEREAS King County is in the throes of a stunning and unprecedented affordable housing and homelessness crisis, with sky-high rents driving working-class households (especially families of color), seniors, and students out of the county and/or into homelessness; and

WHEREAS 42.6% of King County residents are renters, whose average rents have increased by 43% between 2012 and 2017 – far beyond the rate of inflation and more than double the national average, disproportionately affecting the county’s 124,000 low- and moderate-income households; and

WHEREAS the loss of affordable housing in King County is a crisis that deeply impacts the lives of people throughout our county and region, disproportionately harming people of color, immigrants, the LGBTQ community, women, indigenous people and disabled people, all of whom have long struggled against entrenched and unjust inequality; and

WHEREAS Washington State has, since 1981 – when real-estate lobby influence led to enactment of a law providing that “No city or town of any class may enact, maintain, or enforce ordinances or other provisions which regulate the amount of rent to be charged” – banned any form of residential rent control; and

WHEREAS, on April 15, 2019, renter rights advocates from the Tenants Union of Washington, the City of Seattle Renters’ Commission, union members, renters organizing their buildings, immigrant rights activists, socialists, and Seattle City Councilmember Kshama Sawant announced plans to advocate for enactment this year of a [citywide rent-control ordinance](#) that would become effective the moment the State Legislature lifts its rent-control ban; and

WHEREAS, over the ensuing three months, activists in Seattle collected more than 10,000 signatures from fellow residents demanding that the City take action on rent control;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that addressing the rapid loss of affordable housing in King County is of vital importance to our members and to residents of King County generally, and we fully support efforts to expand the development of affordable social housing and to adopt rent-control policies free of corporate loopholes; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we urge the King County Council and King County Executive to provide urgently needed protection against further exorbitant rent increases, by adopting a comprehensive, countywide rent-control policy, free of corporate loopholes, to become effective immediately upon repeal of the State’s ban on local rent control; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we urge the Washington State Legislature to lift its crippling statewide ban on rent control, by repealing RCW 32.21.830.

Adopted January 28, 2020, by the Martin Luther King County Democratic Central Committee

Previously adopted by both LD32 and LD43;  
Originated in LD32 by Sally Soriano & Brent McFarlane,  
and subsequently edited for KCDCC