

City of Pittsburgh
City Council Proclamation

Zero Evictions Day Proclamation recognizes that work is needed to protect housing as a human right, expresses solidarity with the International Alliance of Inhabitants Zero Evictions Campaign

October 1, 2019

WHEREAS, in 2018, 14,181 eviction court actions— the highest in a decade—were filed by landlords against Allegheny County residents; and,

WHEREAS, between 2014 and 2016, Allegheny County saw 40,000 eviction filings, and Pittsburgh continues to see a gap of nearly 20,000 affordable housing units; and,

WHEREAS, Pittsburgh residents’ experiences reflect a global housing crisis that is producing similar impacts on cities and communities around the world; and,

WHEREAS, housing insecurity and evictions have the most harmful effects on our community’s most vulnerable residents, especially children, senior citizens, women, and low-income residents; and,

WHEREAS, housing insecurity disproportionately affects African-American households and other minority groups, contrary to the U.S. government’s obligations under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD); and,

WHEREAS, 71% of Pittsburgh families living in poverty are headed by single women and more subject to housing insecurity; and,

WHEREAS, Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that “Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services...”; and,

WHEREAS, in 2011, Pittsburgh became the 5th city in the United States to proclaim itself a “Human Rights City,” promising to “to provide leadership and advocacy to secure, protect, and promote human rights for all people”; and,

WHEREAS, in 2016 Pittsburgh became the 6th city in the United States to pass legislation implementing the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, promising to work to overcome discrimination and to encourage and promote access to safe and affordable housing and transportation; and,

WHEREAS, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Human Right to Adequate Housing has emphasized the need for governments to make human rights “the overriding goal, not a subsidiary or neglected obligation”; and,

WHEREAS, the United Nations also called for concrete steps to achieve adequate housing for all by 2030, by re-establishing housing as a social good and preventing the excessive accumulation of wealth; and,

WHEREAS, the International Alliance of Inhabitants has launched a “[Zero Evictions Campaign](#)” to promote “international solidarity to achieve dignity and security in housing,” and calling for global actions during the month of October; and,

WHEREAS, a diverse array of Pittsburgh and Allegheny County residents have come together to build a housing justice movement in our region that will center human rights in housing policies and advance human rights and dignity for all residents; and,

WHEREAS, Pittsburgh’s City Council has begun to take important steps to address the City’s housing crisis, including the establishment of the Housing Opportunity Fund and recent inclusionary zoning legislation.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Council of the City of Pittsburgh does affirm its commitment to the human right to housing; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Council of the City of Pittsburgh does hereby declare October 1st, 2019 to be “Zero Evictions Day” in the City of Pittsburgh.

Sponsored by Councilperson Erika Strassburger

Co-sponsored by Councilmembers Bruce A. Kraus, Corey O’Connor, R. Daniel Lavelle, Deb Gross, Darlene M. Harris, Anthony Coghill, Theresa Kail-Smith,
and Rev. Ricky V. Burgess

Bruce A. Kraus
President of Council

Attest: Brenda F. Pree, CMC
Clerk of Council

In Council, October 1st, 2019