July 10, 2014

Dear Department of Transportation,

As a CalTrans Tenant of almost 20 years, I am concerned about my future as a resident of the City of South Pasadena. When I saw my home at [redacted] on the list of Phase I properties to be sold, my first reaction was one of shock. I cried for 2 days, even though I knew this phase was coming. Then, I felt helpless in determining what will happen.

I know that what the Dept. of Transportation does is governed by rules and regulations which are determined in part by the California Legislature. This has been shown to me by the many letters you have sent me outlining them. It is very clear what happens if a tenant

chooses to participate in the Affordable Housing Program. But this is a program that many of the Cal Trans Tenants fall on the outside of being included. When we began renting, our incomes and situations put us in the realm of the income guidelines, but as time has gone by, our income and economic situations have increased but not enough to make us competitive or even qualify for loans to purchase the homes we are living in today. We are not rich people. I cannot even keep up with the cost of living and, as a widow on a single income and a public school teacher's salary, I have not had a pay raise for the last 8 years until recently and that does not even cover the 10%/6mo. rent increase and increases in utilities and City water and trash increases.

My reason for writing to you is to be included in the public comments for the sale of the 710 properties. Please consider the following items and try to design something that is fair for the tenants who come last on the priority list in the Roberti Bill.

1. Take into consideration the amount of rent paid over the years and treat the rental agreements as rent/options to buy. This would help to decrease the fair market prices to within an attainable purchase price for tenants who do not qualify for the Affordable Housing Program.
2. Take into consideration the cost of repairs and maintenance needed to update the properties to fair market value, including land-scaping, termite damage, foundation work, electrical, plumbing, painting, flooring, cement and concrete work to driveways, sidewalks and retaining walls, and roofing. Use these costs to adjust the fair market value.

3. Although I think I saw that the bottom tier of the Roberti Bill does not include the 30 year covenant for sale and maintenance, if it does apply, credit years of tenancy toward the 30 years.

4. Help the tenants to secure loans to purchase the homes. It will be very difficult for any of us to obtain home loans because of the involvement of Cal Trans and the condition of the property.

5. Take into consideration that the Los Angeles area is in the top 10 list of most expensive areas to live and that the tenants who make just a little bit too much money to qualify for the affordable housing program still cannot participate in purchasing the homes at Fair Market Value because they do not generate enough income and the income guidelines should be adjusted to reflect the high cost of living and provide some sort of sliding scale to help the tenants qualify.

Please consider these things as the regulations are created. I am hopeful that something can be done to help the situations of the many tenants who are part of the communities they live in and would like to remain in their homes of many years. I believe that the Great State of California will help to take care of these citizens, the CalTrans Tenants.

Thank you for your consideration.

Marie Ibsen Risigari-Gai

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If you wish to contact me by phone, my cell # is:

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