

Submitter: Vanessa Nowitzky

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Housing and Development

Measure: SB799

Dear Members of the Committee,

I live in a region where wildfires, the pandemic, racism, and a lack of social services have caused lasting damage to thousands of people's lives. My own household is one disaster away from disintegrating. Our economy here is driven by live performing arts, once a celebration of joy and ritual renewal, now greatly reduced in scope and driven to a despairing screech. I applaud the courage of these actors, yet mourn for thousands more performers and artists who can no longer find a place for their highly trained talents. The public libraries, once a sanctuary for solitary minds, are overrun by the unwashed houseless who simply need a place to get warm. I applaud the kindness of our librarians, but this is an indictment to the ineffectiveness of our government, which will one day be torn down if it does not serve its people. Losing our grasp of the aesthetic and cognitive life reduces us to survival needs only, toppling the pyramid of Maslow's needs to rubble. Human potential is lost when it is devalued by the greed of those who have and could share, but are too scared to care. Those of middle income are not at fault. When we do the math, it's easy to see that the billionaires at the top need to contribute more. Wealth inequality in America is far more drastic than we think: <https://youtu.be/QPKKQnijnsM> The billionaires themselves cannot fathom how much money they have and could never use in their entire lives, while millions of less fortunate lives hang by a thread. It's obvious we need a systemic overhaul. But those of you of middle income need to be liaisons. Stimulus checks and bills like 799 are the bare minimum, bandaids to keep the impoverished from bleeding on you. We ask you to do what you can.

In order to slow the threat of widespread evictions and prevent homelessness, we need reasonable reforms that gives tenants a real chance to stay in their homes and implement the lessons from the pandemic: including working less and exercising more, so that we can all stay healthy and strong. Please support Senate Bill 799, which will give tenants a chance to fight unjust evictions and time to get rent assistance when needed.