



MONICA MARTINEZ SIMMONS
SEATTLE CITY CLERK

Via E-Mail and USPS

March 13, 2017

Devin Silvernail
Seattleites for Rent Transparency
603 12th Avenue E #303
Seattle, WA 98102

SUBJECT: *Receipt of Proposed Initiative Measure No. 127,
concerning establishing rules for transparency in rental pricing*

Dear Mr. Silvernail:

This notice acknowledges the receipt and filing of your proposed initiative measure with the Office of the City Clerk on Thursday, March 9, 2017. Identification number, Initiative No. 127, has been assigned to the initiative measure.

The submitted petition has been reviewed for compliance with the appropriate formatting requirements. As provided for in SMC 2.08.040, the petition is in acceptable form, and our office has the following recommended changes:

Form of Petition

- Print the petition on 11x17 paper, which is the largest acceptable paper size;
- Add the petitioner's contact information (*name, address, and phone number*) to the printed version. It was noted the information was included on the electronic version;
- Remove the Seattle Municipal Code editor's note number 9, first line, attached to "Ordinance 94289 [9] provided as follows"; and
- Consider using at least a 10 point size font to improve the average person's ability to read the petition. It is acceptable for the full measure to be on multiple pages.

Technical changes

Please see the attached suggested revisions that are provided in track changes for your review. These changes are designed to make the code language consistent with the City of Seattle's Legislation and Code Drafting Standards. Once an initiative is passed by the people it may not be changed for two years.

Please be advised the proposed initiative measure was transmitted to the City Attorney's Office for review and preparation of a ballot title. The Office of the City Clerk will be in contact with you in writing and by telephonic notification no later than the end of business on Thursday, March 16, 2017, for the purpose of transmitting the final ballot title.

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Should you have any questions regarding the process or the information contained herein, please contact me at 206-684-8361 or by email at monica.simmons@seattle.gov.

Sincerely,



Monica Martinez Simmons
City Clerk

Attachment (1)

March 9th, 2017

To: Seattle City Clerk
RE: Letter of Transmittal, Initiative Petition
Rental Cost Transparency Initiative

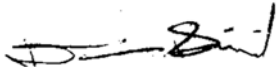
Hello,

Please accept this letter of transmittal of the proposed initiative petition submitted today to establish rules for transparency in rental pricing. An electronic copy of this petition was sent to clerk@seattle.gov today as well.

Contact person:

Devin Silvernail
603 12th Avenue E #303
Seattle, WA 98102
206-295-4192
contact@whatsinmyrent.com

Sincerely,



Devin Silvernail
Seattleites for Rent Transparency

WARNING

Ordinance 94289 [link](#) provides as follows:

Section 1. It is unlawful for any person:

1. To sign or decline to sign any petition for a City initiative, referendum, or Charter amendment, in exchange for any consideration or gratuity or promise thereof; or
2. To give or offer any consideration or gratuity to anyone to induce him or her to sign or not to sign a petition for a City initiative, referendum, or Charter amendment; or
3. To interfere with or attempt to interfere with the right of any voter to sign or not to sign a petition for a City initiative, referendum, or Charter amendment by threat, intimidation or any other corrupt means or practice; or
4. To sign a petition for a City initiative, referendum, or Charter amendment with any other than his or her true name, or to knowingly sign more than one (1) petition for the same initiative, referendum or Charter amendment measure, or to sign any such petition knowing that he or she is not a registered voter of The City of Seattle.

Section 2. Any person violating any of the provisions of this ordinance shall upon conviction thereof be punishable by a fine of not more than Five Hundred Dollars (\$500) or by imprisonment in the City Jail for a period not to exceed six (6) months, or by both such fine and imprisonment.

**INITIATIVE PETITION FOR
SUBMISSION TO THE
SEATTLE CITY COUNCIL**

To the City Council of The City of Seattle:

We, the undersigned registered voters of The City of Seattle, State of Washington, propose and ask for the enactment as an ordinance of the measure known as Initiative Measure No. entitled:

(here set forth the established ballot title of the measure),

a full, true and correct copy of which is included herein, and we petition the Council to enact said measure as an ordinance; and, if not enacted within forty-five (45) days from the time of receipt thereof by the City Council, then to be submitted to the qualified electors of The City of Seattle for approval or rejection at the next regular election or at a special election in accordance with Article IV, Section 1 of the City Charter; and each of us for himself or herself says: I have personally signed this petition; I am a registered voter of The City of Seattle, State of Washington, and my residence address is correctly stated.

| Petitioner's Signature | Printed Name | Residence Address Street and Number | Date Signed |
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INITIATIVE ____ ESTABLISHING RULES FOR TRANSPARENCY IN RENTAL PRICING

AN ORDINANCE BY THE PEOPLE OF THE CITY OF SEATTLE TO ESTABLISH RULES REQUIRING THE COST BREAKDOWN OF RENTAL UNIT PRICES (RENT) TO BE PRESENTED TO TENANTS, WRITTEN INTO NEW RENTAL AGREEMENTS, AND TO BE PRESENTED FOR EACH RENT INCREASE THAT A LANDLORD MAY REQUEST.

WHEREAS, the City of Seattle has seen a sustained population growth in recent years; and,

WHEREAS, since January 2012, the City of Seattle has seen a sharp increase in the cost of rental housing, with the current estimated average cost of a one-bedroom apartment rising 59% to approximately \$23,352 annually and a two-bedroom apartment rising 74% to approximately \$32,832 annually; and,

WHEREAS, housing can be seen as a service, but unlike many other services, renters are not given a breakdown of costs associated with their monthly rent; and,

WHEREAS, rent increases can range from 1% to 400+% with no explanation as to why their rent has gone up; and,

WHEREAS, renters deserve to know what they are paying for; and,

WHEREAS, the Charter of the City of Seattle expressly reserves legislative authority for the City of Seattle to the People of the City of Seattle;

Now, Therefore, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE CITY OF SEATTLE AS FOLLOWS:

A new [provision of Chapter 22.216 is added to](#) the Seattle Municipal Code [is added to read](#) as follows:

[22.216 TRANSPARENCY IN RENTAL PRICING](#)

[Sec. 1. 22.216.010](#) Disclosure of ~~Costs-costs Associated-associated~~ with ~~Rent-rent & and Rent-increases~~ [rent increases](#)

Property owners or landlords must provide to renters, in writing, a breakdown of costs included in the price of rent. These include, but are not limited to: actual cost per unit for base rent, mortgage, insurance, property taxes, rental property registration fees, costs/fees associated with maintenance, and operations.

[Sec. 1.1.A](#). Upon ~~Signing-signing~~ [Rental-rental Agreement-agreement](#)

A breakdown of rental costs must be clearly written into every new rental agreement.

[Sec. 1.2B](#). ~~Rent-increases~~ [increases](#)

A breakdown of rental cost must be included in any rent increase notice.

[Sec. 1.3C](#). Renters ~~Already-already~~ on a ~~Lease-lease~~ [When-when Law-law Takes-takes Effect-effect](#)

Upon ~~passage-the effective date of this law~~ [Initiative 127](#), property owners or landlords have 120 days to provide all current renters with a breakdown of rental cost in writing.

[22.216.020](#) ~~Sec. 2~~. Right of ~~Renters-renters~~ to ~~Request-request~~ [Proof-proof of Cost-cost](#)

At any point in which a renter questions the validity of the required rental cost breakdown, they may request that their property owner or landlord provides them with written evidence of the described costs. The property owner or landlord then has 21 days to provide written evidence to the tenant that requested it.

[22.216.030](#) ~~Sec. 3~~. Included ~~Properties-properties~~

This law covers all rental units in the City of Seattle, excluding those deemed exempt under Section [22.216.040](#).

[22.216.040](#) ~~Sec. 4~~. Exempted properties

The following properties are exempt from this law:

- ~~A)~~ [A](#). Owner-occupied single-family units
- ~~B)~~ [B](#). Mother-in-law or "cottage" units
- ~~C)~~ [C](#). Multi-family buildings with less than 3 units
- ~~D)~~ [D](#). Federal & State Subsidized units or properties

[22.216.050](#) ~~Sec. 5~~. Public ~~Reporting-reporting~~ of ~~Rent-rent~~ [Increases-increases](#)

The ~~city-City~~ will provide an online portal for renters, property owners, or landlords to report costs associated with rent increases. Property owners and landlord have ~~5-five~~ years to voluntarily provide this information after ~~passage-of this law~~ [Initiative 127 becomes effective](#). After ~~5-five~~ years, this information

will be included in each rental property registration or renewal with the ~~Seattle~~ Department of Construction ~~&-and~~ [Inspections](#). At which time, the online portal will remain open for renters to report subsequent rent increases. Collection of this data will allow the City to accurately track rental cost patterns on a continual basis. Information on this resource must be given in writing at the beginning of each new tenancy.

[22.216.060](#) ~~Sec. 6~~. Enforcement and ~~Penalties-penalties~~

The ~~Seattle~~ Department of Construction ~~&-and~~ [Inspection \(SDCI\)](#) shall be given power to enforce this ~~law~~ [Chapter 22.216](#).

[Sec. 6.1A](#). Failure to ~~Report-report~~ [Cost-cost Breakdowns-breakdowns](#) to ~~Renters-renters~~

First-time offenders will be issued a written warning from [SDCI](#). The penalty for subsequent failures to report rental cost breakdown will be \$100 per unit per month until the offense is remedied.

[Sec. 6.2B](#). Failure to ~~Report-report~~ [Cost-cost Breakdowns-breakdowns](#) to [SDCI](#)

Takes effect ~~5-five~~ years after ~~the effective date~~ [passage of Initiative 127](#). First time offenders will be issued a written warning from [SDCI](#). The penalty for subsequent failures to report rental cost breakdown ~~to~~ will be \$20 per unit per month until the offense is remedied.

[Sec. 6.3C](#). Providing ~~False-false~~ [Information-information](#) to ~~Renters-renters~~

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If renters believe they are given false information, they may report the instance to SDCI. If SDCI finds that this information is false property owners or landlords have 21 days from the time of the report to provide proof that this information is correct, or to correct the information. If they do not act within the time allotted, renters are free to pursue arbitration and the property owner or landlord will be liable to pay the difference in rental cost if the information provided is proven to be false.