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## Oakland City Council approves funding for wage and tenant protection laws

Bay City News

Published: October 22, 2015, 7:02 am



OAKLAND (BCN) — The Oakland City Council has approved a budget amendment to allocate funding to enforce the city's minimum wage and tenant-protection laws.

According to Vice Mayor Rebecca Kaplan, who co-authored the amendment with Councilwoman Desley Brooks, the council's vote Tuesday night allocates \$240,000 for the minimum wage and paid sick-days law and \$100,000 for the tenant protection law.

Kaplan and Brooks said they believe the amendment will alleviate wage theft and tenant evictions in Oakland.

The council's vote calls for city staff to begin the request for proposals process to implement the programs immediately.

Kaplan said in a statement that enforcing the minimum wage and paid sick-days law will ensure that employees aren't being shortchanged and enforcing the tenant-protection law will educate tenants about their eviction rights and help them understand the remedies to which they are entitled.

In a separate action, the City Council also approved a resolution co-authored by Kaplan and Brooks in response to what they described as the Metropolitan Transportation Commission's threat of a hostile take-over of the Association of Bay Area Governments.

Kaplan said the resolution says the City of Oakland is not in support of MTC's threat to withhold funding for ABAG and instead is urging the MTC, the transportation planning agency for the greater Bay Area, to release full funding for ABAG.

Kaplan said the resolution supports a transparent discussion that would include all stakeholders on restructuring the relationship between the MTC and ABAG, including a possible full merger.

Kaplan said at the council's meeting that she previously served on a special committee which successfully merged two government agencies before and is therefore not against a full merger between the MTC and ABAG.

Kaplan said a full merger makes sense in order to cut down costs and inefficiencies but it must not involve "threats or bullying."

She said the merger that she worked on, in which the Alameda County Congestion Management Agency and the Alameda County Transportation Improvement Authority combined into the Alameda County Transportation Commission, was successful and has been given the highest possible bond rating.

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