

OPINION

Columns

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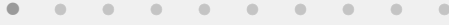
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Opinion

LETTERS 02/19/2017, 03:15pm

Letters: Rent stabilization protects low-income tenants



In 1953, the Back of the Yards Council, in session at 4600 S. Ashland, passes unanimous resolution demanding state rent control if federal curbs in place at the time were allowed to lapse. | Sun-Times Library

Letters to the Editor

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Rent stabilization, which replaced the original rent control construct as the model of choice in half a dozen cities around the country, is gaining momentum as a preferred method to protect low-income tenants from displacement. Rent stabilization accounts for costs associated with inflation, maintenance and repairs, and capital improvements in a way that strict rent control measures were inadequate to address properly. Though not perfect, rent stabilization has proven to be effective against gentrification and allowing lower income families to stay in gentrifying areas. If we're truly committed to living in mixed-income communities, rent stabilization is an effective tool.

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According to a recent study by the Institute of Governmental Studies at the University of California-Berkeley, “[T]o help stabilize existing communities we need to look beyond housing development alone to strategies that protect tenants and help them stay in their homes.” Rent control is one of those strategies that can offset the current speculation in the housing market, which destabilizes communities that are already on edge.

Chicago is facing a housing crisis that has been made worse by the lack of transparency at the Chicago Housing Authority, which still withholds millions of tax dollars while there is a huge shortage of affordable housing units in gentrifying neighborhoods such as Pilsen. In addition, the Chicago Planning and Development Department and the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning focused on Transit Oriented Development projects that are increasing the supply of high-end housing units but without a comprehensive housing strategy to meet the high demand for affordable housing units as well.

*Byron Sigcho, director
Pilsen Alliance*

We should have listened

President Barack Obama tried to tell Donald Trump and the American voter that being president was “serious business.” Maybe we should have listened more carefully.

Martin Nicholson, Niles

Did not inherit mess

President Donald Trump did not, as he claimed in his press conference, “inherit a mess.” He inherited the complex federal government we need to address serious problems both domestically and internationally. What is needed is informed, nuanced leadership by a president who surrounds himself with experienced people who understand the necessity of drawing on the wisdom and experience of career government employees. So sad! That’s not what we’ve got.

Mary F. Warren, Wheaton

Greed in Congress

In the past few weeks, congressional Republicans have been irreverently trying to weaken and in some instances dismantle the Endangered Species Act. They’re attacking a humane governmental feat that has been saving whales, wolves, bald eagles, falcons, seals, otters and many other animals, birds, fish, reptiles and amphibians wrongly targeted by organizations and industries determined to permanently obliterate them for profit and greed.

Brien Comerford, Glenview

Gun lobby doesn’t care

In Friday's editorial, you stated: the gun lobby ... does not necessarily love Takiya Holmes. That sums up a large part of the problem. The gun lobby doesn't care a whit about inner city lives, but would they care if white kids in the suburbs were being gunned down every day? Maybe, but probably not. There's ice-water flowing through their veins, and they're proud of it. The real blame lies with our lily-livered lawmakers, who won't stand up to the gun lobby, and are convinced that doing the right thing will cost them their jobs next election day.

I say vote them out if they refuse to do right by you. Stand up for your rights! Organize! Demand to be heard! Take control! The gun lobby is not bigger than you. If you wait for Trump to send in the feds, you won't be allowed out of the house.

Tony Galati, Lemont

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