

Dear City Commissioners,

The Alachua County Education Association, on behalf of all the public education employees we represent here in Alachua County, would like to express our formal endorsement of the comprehensive Renters' Rights ordinance proposal put forward by the Alachua County Labor Coalition (Aclc). Renters in this community are due basic rights and protections such as a safe place to live, freedom from discrimination and predatory landlords, affordable utility bills, and disclosure of their rights and responsibilities as tenants. The proposal put forward by the Aclc, in consultation with City and County Commissioners and Florida Legal Services as well as landlords, renters, neighborhood associations, faith communities, civic organizations, and other stakeholders throughout our community, is revenue-neutral, based upon existing programs with a demonstrated track record of success, and builds upon already existing services.

Our organization decided to support this campaign because all working people, regardless of income level or ability to own a home deserve to live in dignity.

The proposals put forward by the Aclc are not meant to be exclusive of other initiatives, nor are they a definitive solution for solving our community's affordable housing challenges. But they are a solid start and a good faith measure on the part of our elected officials in a community dominated by rental housing. The supply of affordable housing needs to be increased, and there are a variety of options for accomplishing that goal. We also believe all renters in our community deserve the basic rights and protections described in the Aclc's proposal. Just as employment law establishes a clear set of rules for employer-employee relations in the workplace, both landlords and tenants would benefit from a clearer definition of their rights and responsibilities and a process for addressing negligence by either party.

Thank you,
Carmen Ward,
Alachua County Education Association, President.

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Resolution by the Alachua County Democratic Executive Committee
TOPIC: Advocating for ACDEC support of Renters' Rights protections put forward by the Alachua County Labor Coalition (ACLC).

APPROVED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE 53 to ZERO at DEC MEETING, JANUARY 2019
Resolution Language:

WHEREAS, Our community has a severe shortage of affordable housing with 3000 new residents projected to be moving into Alachua County every year, and

WHEREAS, Renters in this community are due basic rights and protections such as a safe place to live, freedom from discrimination and predatory landlords, affordable utility bills, and disclosure of their rights and responsibilities as tenants, and

WHEREAS, Without proper licensing, landlords have little incentive to keep properties up to code or fix complaints made by tenants, and

WHEREAS, Many landlords who do not keep their properties up to code rent to low income households. These households pay upwards of 50% of their income on housing and often live paycheck to paycheck, and

WHEREAS, Many times, when these citizens do complain or attempt to make issues known to their landlord they are met with ignored calls or threats of eviction, and

WHEREAS, While the majority of landlords in this community are ethical business people, an unfortunate few have made it a practice to routinely deny the return of rental deposits to their tenants, regardless of cause, and

WHEREAS, People deserve protection from discrimination, and discrimination in housing is particularly insidious, and

WHEREAS, Both landlords and tenants would benefit from increased education, and this education can be easily provided by landlords to prospective tenants with basic information about their dwelling units, and

WHEREAS, All rental properties throughout our community should be subject to periodic inspections to ensure compliance with basic safety and energy/water efficiency standards, and

WHEREAS, The Alachua County Labor Coalition (ACLC) has proposed a comprehensive renters' rights ordinance for passage by the City of Gainesville to address these concerns, and WHEREAS, The proposal put forward by the ACLC, in consultation with City and County Commissioners and Florida Legal Services as well as landlords, renters, neighborhood associations, faith communities, civic organizations, and other stakeholders throughout our community, is revenue-neutral, based upon existing programs with a demonstrated track record of success, builds upon already existing services and levels the playing field for the majority of landlords throughout our community who strive to keep their housing livable, and

WHEREAS, The proposal put forward by the ACLC includes adding protections to City code against discrimination based upon citizenship status and source of income, mandates that units are inspected, ensures that rental housing in Gainesville is safe and is at minimum basic quality level, and requires disclosure by landlords of tenants' rights and responsibilities and basic information about their dwelling units.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Alachua County Democratic Executive Committee supports the passage of the proposed Renters' Rights protections.

BE IT ALSO RESOLVED, the Alachua County Democratic Executive Committee will provide a letter to the ACLC expressing our support which may be used to support their efforts to pass the proposed protections.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alachua County Democratic Executive Committee urges all levels of government to adopt these renter's rights protections by ordinance and legislation.

Carol Barron
1801 NW 11th Road
Gainesville, Florida 32605
April 15, 2019

Dear City Commissioners:

I am a property owner, a rental property owner and State Certified Residential Contractor. I have spent my career providing "Affordable Housing" as a private citizen, a City employee working for the Housing Division, the Construction Director for Neighborhood Housing and Development Corporation, and, the Construction Director for Alachua Habitat for Humanity. I have been involved in the development of new subdivisions within Alachua County and the construction of Energy Star new home construction and scattered site infill. Additionally I have rehabbed many existing homes in Gainesville and administered SHIP Funding for Emergency Repair Programs to Very Low to Below Medium Income families. I have witnessed many conditions of deferred maintenance and exorbitant utility bills, and for years have been involved in efforts to help defer some of these causes with groups such as Community Weatherization Coalition.

This is about saving energy, about maintaining property values, about making all landlords accountable and providing safe and healthy housing for all.

- 1) All rental properties should have Landlord Permits—not just single-family dwellings.
- 2) All landlords should have to have a Mandatory Inspection prior to renting. Those of us that have rented to Section 8 clients have inspections by the Housing Authority and comply with Minimum Housing Standards.
- 3) The City should hire more Code Enforcement Officers to be able to conduct inspections on all rentals that have Landlord Permits so that our aging housing stock is kept in decent condition.
- 4) GRU should extend their LEEP Program to landlords to enable affordable ways to replace poorly performing heating air conditioning, under insulated attics, and water wasting plumbing fixtures.

Unfortunately as our housing stock ages, as the cost of construction and repair increases, it has become increasingly harder to keep the rents down and provide affordable housing.

All landlords should be held accountable! I am in support of the principles of the ACLC Renter's rights.

Sincerely,



Carol Barron

Greetings Commissioners,

The Cultural Arts Coalition is reaching out to you to ask you to support ACLC' Renter's Rights Proposal.

Each summer our youth as Environmental Ambassadors look at ways to save energy to reduce GRU bills for Gainesville residents as a whole but specifically East Gainesville where many rentals are old structures. We have partnered with GRU on projects to reduce energy use; like installing energy saving light bulbs in more than 200 houses in East Gainesville including Lincoln Estates, also our Ambassadors was a part of a permanent exhibit at the FI Museum of Natural History sharing everyday ways we can reduce energy usage in our homes.

This past summer the Ambassadors read Cynthia Barnett's publication "Energy Burden". A big part of that was working poor people paying large percentages of their income on utility bills. Many of them living in substandard housing losing energy through windows, doors, little to no insulation and appliances that contribute to high utility bills.

In too many cases landlords are absent or refuse to do anything about their tenant's high utility bills because they know options are few for the working poor.

These Gainesville residents need your help. Whereas we do not want to cause any hardships to landlords who are trying to be fair to their tenants, we do need a way to assure the working poor get treated with the same basic rights and protections for those making six figures.

CAC strongly encourage you to create whatever policies that you can, so that you can say to our young people, you did everything you could for All of your citizens no matter their income or position in life.

Sincerely,

Nkwanda Jah/Environmental Ambassadors Program

Emmanuel Mennonite Church endorses the work of the Alachua County Labor Coalition and others to provide accessible housing in our community for lower-income families and individuals.

We believe that access to shelter, like access to food and clean water, is a natural human right.

Sadly here in Gainesville and Alachua County as in many other communities the housing market does not deliver affordable housing either for purchase or rental.

Developers have understandably built for the high end of the market, sometimes with public assistance in the form of tax breaks, and neglected housing for the working poor. We have many vacant luxury apartments across town, while the supply of low-rent units does not meet the demand.

We hope city and county can work together to solve this problem.

Dear Gainesville Neighbors,

We, Graduate Assistants United-UF Chapter (GAU), would like to express our formal endorsement of the comprehensive Renters' Rights ordinance proposal put forward by the Alachua County Labor Coalition (ACLC). Renters in this community are due basic rights and protections such as a safe place to live, freedom from discrimination and predatory landlords, affordable utility bills, and disclosure of their rights and responsibilities as tenants. The proposal put forward by the ACLC, in consultation with City and County Commissioners and Florida Legal Services as well as landlords, renters, neighborhood associations, faith communities, civic organizations, and other stakeholders throughout our community, is revenue-neutral, based upon existing programs with a demonstrated track record of success, and builds upon already existing services.

GAU decided to support this campaign because too many of our members suffer from the kinds of practices this campaign seeks to end through innovative policies. Our members include many non-citizens and non-permanent residents, who face discrimination and unfair treatment from landlords who either fear people from abroad or wish to take advantage of the fear many non-citizens have in the current political climate. All of our members are also graduate students, which makes each and every one of us is susceptible to having our lease applications denied due to landlord's uncertainty about our income. Many of our members rent older houses and apartments, which are very energy inefficient and lead to inflated utility costs. The policies proposed by the ACLC would begin to remedy and prevent the harm resulting from these practices.

The proposal put forward by the ACLC is not meant to be exclusive of other initiatives, nor are they a definitive solution for solving our community's affordable housing challenges. But they are a solid start and a good faith measure on the part of our elected officials in a community dominated by rental housing. The supply of affordable housing needs to be increased, and there are a variety of options for accomplishing that goal. We also believe all renters in our community deserve the basic rights and protections described in the ACLC's proposal. Just as employment law establishes a clear set of rules for employer-employee relations in the workplace, both landlords and tenants would benefit from a clearer definition of their rights and responsibilities and a process for addressing negligence by either party.

With Love,
GAU
Bobby Mermer, Co-President





Why I think a Landlord and Renter's rights policy is necessary. .

My disabled uncle had to move in with me this year. His apartment complex was sold to a developer who made no changes, except to call the complex "Condos". The rent went up \$200. The tenants living there all had lease agreements that were not upheld by our courts. The courts determined that the previous landlords had sold the leases and the new landlords didn't have to honor them. And so my disabled uncle along with several of his neighbors (most had been there 3 years or more and my uncle had 9 years) could no longer afford to live in their homes and had to move. What type of ordinance could have protected him, there aren't any currently.

I work with Critical Home Repair. I refer a lot of homeowners to the LEEP program, Community Action Agency and other non-profits for energy efficiency repairs. Our renters can't take advantage of these programs for improvements to energy efficiency because they're not the owner, unfortunately most landlords wouldn't meet the income qualifications to participate in the programs, so they don't invest in energy efficiency. An energy policy for these renters could help to eliminate high utility bills.

I've seen people lose security deposits for cleaning bills, and normal wear and tear. I do realize there's good and bad on both sides. The bottom line is this, for those tenants who are vulnerable to predatory type landlord practices we need a written renters' rights policy. For those landlords who experience property damage or loss, we need protection.

I think we should collectively work with landlords, tenant associations, ACLC and the City Commission to draft a rental rights' policy that is fair to both landlords and tenants. There's no quick and easy way to do this. We must all approach this matter with open heads and hearts. It's important that we draft a policy that protects renters from predatory and unfair practices, and that doesn't cause our landlords to lose business and profit. One way we can possibly do this, is to incentivize landlords who provide energy efficient improvements to occupied properties, and work with the local utility company to devise a plan that would allow those tenants who pay a tax for LEEP be able to participate in it.

Sincerely,

Carla Lewis-Miles

Greater Duval Neighborhood Association



**INTERNATIONAL
BROTHERHOOD
OF ELECTRICAL
WORKERS®**

LOCAL UNION 1205

**2510 N.W. 6th Street
Gainesville, Florida 32609
T: 352.376.7701
F: 352.376.9922
www.ibew1205.org**

January 18, 2019

To Whom it May Concern:

The International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers local 1205, representing over 600 workers and their families here in North Florida is proud to endorse the renter's rights ordinance proposed by the Alachua County Labor Coalition. Promoting a better life for working class people is fundamental to the purpose of our organization and fair housing is an important component of that. There can be no economic security without fair housing. The proposed ordinance would take advantage of existing county resources and with little or no extra cost to protect both renters and responsible landlords from unscrupulous slumlords who take advantage of people who currently have few avenues available to enforce their rights.

We firmly believe that renters in Alachua county deserve the basic protections offered by this proposal. People should be able to secure housing free from discrimination. People need to be provided information on their rights and responsibilities as tenants, and how to enforce those rights. People need an accessible form of arbitration when either parties' responsibilities aren't being met. Responsible landlords shouldn't be forced to compete with slumlords not living up to their responsibilities. Renters should have a reasonable expectation of safety and energy efficiency when renting in Gainesville. There are many issues facing Alachua county involving housing and this ordinance certainly isn't a solution to them all. It is however a good step in the right direction towards fair housing for our community.

James Ingle,
Pres. IBEW 1205

*Serving North Central
Florida, West Florida,
and South Georgia*

Dear Gainesville Neighbors,

We, Indivisible Gainesville, wholeheartedly endorse the comprehensive Renters' Rights ordinance proposal put forward by the Alachua County Labor Coalition (ACLC). Renters in this community are due basic rights and protections, such as a safe place to live, freedom from discrimination by predatory landlords, affordable utility bills, and disclosure of their rights and responsibilities as tenants. The proposal put forward by the ACLC, in consultation with City and County Commissioners and Florida Legal Services as well as landlords, renters, neighborhood associations, faith communities, civic organizations, and other stakeholders throughout our community, is revenue-neutral, based upon existing programs with a demonstrated track record of success, and builds upon already existing services.

In the Spring of 2018, we asked hundreds of our East Gainesville neighbors the open-ended question, "What is one thing you would like our elected officials address?" The third most common response, after education and gun control, was the cost of utilities.

There are many ways that our local elected officials, in conjunction with Gainesville Regional Utilities, can remedy a number of these concerns. But even the renters who are most attentive to their thermostat are no match for homes built before the 1990s, which required little to no environmental standards, proper insulation, up-to-date plumbing, or efficient heating and air units.

Let's be clear: the Renter's Rights and Responsibilities campaign acknowledges that most landlords are fair and decent. But the ones who are not exploit the poor and exacerbate already-severe inequalities in our community.

There are few practical remedies when it comes to unfair retention of deposits, unsafe living conditions, discrimination, and energy inefficiency. Because money is the main requirement for litigation, our legal system is not a viable option for justice.

And currently there is little to no financial incentive for landlords to bring their properties up to current acceptable building standards. In this sense, the market is failing the struggling and exploited renter.

Renters who are facing what are in effect slumlords need allies. They need the authority and resources of government to step in and ensure fairness and some modicum of justice. We cannot thank the ACLC enough for bringing these issues to the community's attention. And we are heartened and hopeful to see the Gainesville City Commission taking up the matter and forming a subcommittee to come up with a solution.

The proposals put forward by the ACLC are not meant to be exclusive of other initiatives, nor are they a definitive solution for solving our community's affordable

housing challenges. But they are a solid start and a good faith measure on the part of our elected officials in a community dominated by rental housing. The supply of affordable housing needs to be increased, and there are a variety of options for accomplishing that goal. We also believe all renters in our community deserve the basic rights and protections described in the ACLC's proposal. Just as employment law establishes a clear set of rules for employer-employee relations in the workplace, both landlords and tenants would benefit from a clearer definition of their rights and responsibilities and a process for addressing negligence by either party.

Respectfully,

Indivisible Gainesville
Sandy Parker

Janice Garry
925 NW 14th Avenue
Gainesville, Florida 32601

October 23, 2018

Dear City Commissioners:

Please recall that I am the home owner and rental property owner in Oakview Neighborhood who spoke at the October 18, 2018 Commission meeting. I voiced that our diverse neighborhood represents what is right about housing in Gainesville.

I am a member of the Alachua County Labor Coalition and am participating in the discussion about the Renter's Rights campaign. I am in support of the concepts of substituting the current Landlord Permit with Landlord Licensing, having safety and efficiency standards and having a mediation or arbitration process for resolution of disputes. Housing is a fundamental need and housing as a product warrants basic standards. Basic standards of safety and quality are in keeping with other types of products.

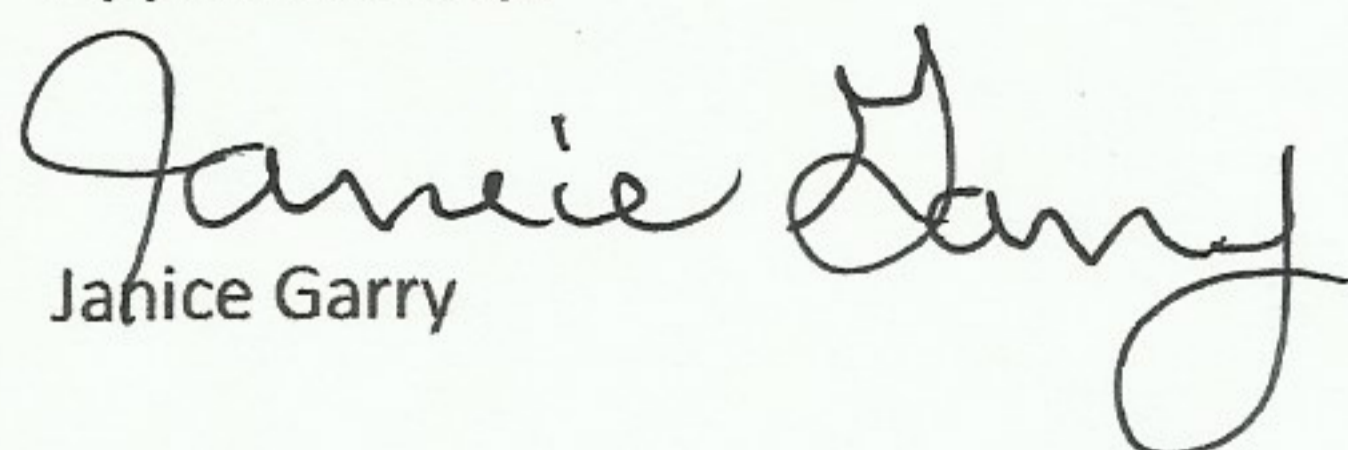
The current Landlord Permit has always struck me as a tax without any benefit. Substituting fees paid for a permit for fees that support a system of rental governance makes more sense. Inspections that are suggested by the ACLC could be proposed in the vein of protecting the value of property, which would benefit me as a property owner. If problems sited had revenue resources for repair, it would further benefit the property owner. Inspections would need to be thoughtfully crafted to be reasonable and supportive rather than myopic and obstructionist. Fees for Landlord Licensing would need to reflect the quantity and size of properties.

Establishing efficiency guidelines for housing would contribute towards a primary city goal of addressing affordable housing. Efficiency guidelines would also contribute towards the recently adopted Ready for 100 sustainable energy by 2045. A home that consumes inordinate energy for temperature control works against affordable housing and energy-neutral goals.

In my profession I have participated in mediation as dispute resolution. I have also read of the resolution success with the Wage Recovery Ordinance. Mediation or arbitration for landlord/renter disputes, thoughtfully crafted, would benefit all parties.

We all recognize that Gainesville is on the cusp of a surge in growth. Now is the time to establish a framework that will support the diverse, creative, nature/culture quality of life we enjoy. I applaud your leadership in addressing affordable housing and launching energy neutrality. The principles of the ACLC Renter's Rights is a good fit with your efforts.

Appreciatively,


Janice Garry



P.O. Box 15285
Gainesville, FL 32604
April 2, 2019

Gainesville City Commission
P.O. Box 490
Gainesville, FL 32627-0490

Re: Proposed Renters' Rights Ordinance

Honorable Mayor and City Commissioners:

The League of Women Voters of Alachua County endorses the proposed Renters' Rights ordinance submitted to the City of Gainesville by the Alachua County Labor Coalition (ACLC). We believe renters in this community are due basic rights and protections.

This proposed ordinance would offer assistance to landlords improving energy efficiency, lowering utility costs for tenants and conserving precious energy resources.

Renters also deserve a mechanism through which they can resolve disputes over security deposits. We recognize there is a need for all landlords to be licensed so that appropriate inspections of rental properties can be completed to assure the health and safety of renters. Licensing fees, which currently are treated as general revenue, would be better utilized to fund the cost of these inspections and mediation disputes. Lastly, renters should not be subjected to discrimination of any kind, which this ordinance would guard against.

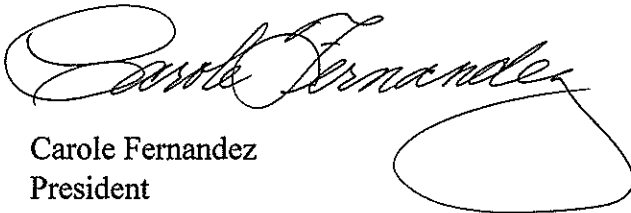
The League of Women Voters of Alachua County is in full support of the ACLC's proposed ordinance. We have been studying affordable housing needs in the city and county only to conclude that too many residents are paying a disproportionate share of their income on housing. At times, utility bills may rival rental costs, with possible unreasonable cost burden on our citizens.

We commend the Alachua County Labor Coalition for its work on behalf of local residents and are in agreement with the key elements of their proposed ordinance, which include:

- 1) Universal, low cost landlord licensing and inspections;
- 2) Lower utility costs by requiring landlords to meet low-cost, high return on investment, energy and water standards;
- 3) Creating a mediation program for rental deposit disputes;
- 4) Disclosure of safety and efficiency ratings as well as defining renters' rights and responsibilities;
- 5) Providing protection from discrimination.

We thank you for all you are doing to make Gainesville a place where all our residents can flourish with dignity.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Carole Fernandez". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name and title.

Carole Fernandez
President
League of Women Voters of Alachua County

The Alachua County NAACP Environmental and Climate Justice Committee (ECJC) focuses on community issues affecting the quality of life and economic equity for all citizens in Gainesville and Alachua County. Environmental Justice recognizes that environmental benefits and burdens are not shared equally among all residents. Consequently, Environmental Justice issues are also civil and human rights issues.

A home is a basic human need. A home is not only where the heart is, it is where a basic sense of stability is housed. The foundation of mental health, physical health, and capacity to be a productive citizen stems from stable, safe, affordable housing for each individual and each family. In this age of climate crisis, it is also where environmental sustainability begins.

The quality of homes for citizens ripples into the quality of a community. There is a shared necessity for citizens needing employment and businesses needing a productive workforce. Stable housing directly translates into a thriving workforce. Individual mental and physical health directly contributes to a child's capacity to learn in school for future job productivity and an adult's current productivity in the work setting. In terms of sustainability, Gainesville has a goal of 100% renewable energy by 2045. Sustainable homes will contribute to the success of this goal.

It behooves every single citizen and business in Gainesville to have stable, safe, sustainable, affordable housing.

Some 50% of Gainesville inhabitants live in rental housing including students and longer term residents. New housing developments cater to students and residents with ample resources. The area of focus for the NAACP Environmental and Climate Justice Committee (ECJC) is the many long term residents who cannot afford quality housing. There is an abundant quantity of older homes that are not properly rehabilitated or maintained, particularly on the east side of Gainesville. Some of them are rentals, some lie as untapped potential. Housing prices are increasing which pushes up rent that is not supported by increased wages. A long term problem of affordable housing is being compounded. Real lives are affected. Businesses are affected. Schools are affected. We are affected. The fundamental need for housing needs help.

Another problem is that many rental properties are not adequately maintained for safety and energy efficiency. Some renters pay significantly more for their utilities bill than they pay for rent because of lousy or no insulation, leaky windows, leaky plumbing and/or ancient appliances. If every landlord had a business model that allowed for property maintenance and improvement within their profit margin, we wouldn't have a problem. If every renter was an informed, conscientious consumer, we wouldn't have a problem. But neither situation is the case. Landlords don't always keep their properties in the same quality condition that they keep their own homes. And renters may be uninformed or uncaring about the need to change HVAC filters or smoke detector batteries, or basic upkeep of appliances and property. It is surprising that there is no state or local licensure for landlords. Hair stylists, nail technicians and lawn service providers require licensure. But there is none for landlords to ensure knowledge and compliance with basic safety and energy efficiency of a residence. That doesn't make sense.

For some months, the City Commission Rental Housing Subcommittee has been meeting to find a balance between the needs and responsibilities of renters and landlords. The Alachua County Labor Coalition has leant ideas, momentum and has produced a position paper, Safe & Healthy Housing for All, that can be read here: <https://laborcoalition.org/safehealthyhousing/our->

[position/](#). The NAACP ECJC applauds and supports these efforts. Specific concepts that we support include universal landlord licensing with a small fee that would be deposited into a designated account for running the rental properties program. Rentals should have minimum standards for safety and energy efficiency with some sort of inspection system for verification. Properties free of complaints could have less frequent inspections. Expectations for the landlord/renter relationship would be provided in a standardized written document, provided and signed in addition to the lease agreement. Disagreements or noncompliance with the agreement could be addressed through arbitration, modeled after Alachua County's very successful Wage Recovery Ordinance.

The NAACP ECJC strongly thinks that a thoughtful, collaboratively built Renter's Rights program would serve landlords, renters and businesses in the shared quest for a thriving community. It would also advance Gainesville's goal of energy sustainability despite certain continued growth. Our vision is quality housing for occupants while allowing the business of property rental to make a reasonable profit while all parties contribute to environmental sustainability. We can do this.

Dear Gainesville Neighbors,

The North Central Florida Central Labor Council, representing over 60,000 working families in the North Central Florida area, would like to express our formal endorsement of the comprehensive Renters' Rights ordinance proposal put forward by the Alachua County Labor Coalition (ACLC). Renters in this community are due basic rights and protections such as a safe place to live, freedom from discrimination and predatory landlords, affordable utility bills, and disclosure of their rights and responsibilities as tenants. The proposal put forward by the ACLC, in consultation with City and County Commissioners and Florida Legal Services as well as landlords, renters, neighborhood associations, faith communities, civic organizations, and other stakeholders throughout our community, is revenue-neutral, based upon existing programs with a demonstrated track record of success, and builds upon already existing services.

Our organization decided to support this campaign because all working people, regardless of income level or ability to own a home deserve to live in dignity.

The proposals put forward by the ACLC are not meant to be exclusive of other initiatives, nor are they a definitive solution for solving our community's affordable housing challenges. But they are a solid start and a good faith measure on the part of our elected officials in a community dominated by rental housing. The supply of affordable housing needs to be increased, and there are a variety of options for accomplishing that goal. We also believe all renters in our community deserve the basic rights and protections described in the ACLC's proposal. Just as employment law establishes a clear set of rules for employer-employee relations in the workplace, both landlords and tenants would benefit from a clearer definition of their rights and responsibilities and a process for addressing negligence by either party.

Thank you,

Lanny Mathis,
North Central Florida Central Labor Council, President.

NATIONAL WOMEN'S LIBERATION



Dear Gainesville Community,

National Women's Liberation is formally endorsing the Renters' Rights ordinance proposal put forward by the Alachua County Labor Coalition (ALCLC). Every renter should have a safe place to live, freedom from discrimination, affordable utility bills, and disclosure of their rights and responsibilities as tenants. The proposal put forward by the Alachua County Labor Coalition, in consultation with City and County Commissioners and Florida Legal Services as well as landlords, renters, neighborhood associations, faith communities, civic organizations, and other stakeholders throughout our community, builds upon already existing services and establishes basic protections for renters that are long overdue.

National Women's Liberation (NWL) is endorsing the Renters' Rights ordinance because every person should have the right to safe housing and to be treated fairly when looking for a place to rent. According to the Pew Research Center¹, more American households are renting their homes now than at any point in the last 50 years; and Black and Latinx households are twice as likely to be renters as whites. NWL recognizes that the Renters' Rights ordinance will strengthen and protect our broader Gainesville community; it will improve quality of life for those of us who rent, as well as those of us whose family members, neighbors, and coworkers rent their homes.

We hope that in addition to passage of this ordinance, our elected officials will prioritize increasing the amount of *affordable* housing and introduce measures to protect renters from rent increases and gentrification. According to the 2018 Out of Reach Report², 46% of Alachua County's households are renters. To afford a modest 1 bedroom apartment at the fair market rent of \$725 per month in Alachua County, a minimum wage worker would have to work 68 hours per week. NWL recognizes the need for housing justice as women still struggle for equal pay. According to research by Eviction Lab³, "[l]ow-income women, especially poor women of color, have a high risk of eviction. Research has shown domestic violence victims and families with children are also at particularly high risk for eviction." Far too many women stay in abusive and unsafe households or endure sexual harassment from landlords due to a lack of economic power and alternative housing options. Passage of this ordinance would show that our elected officials recognize that all renters in our community deserve the basic rights and protections described in the ALCLC's proposal, and that they want the Gainesville community to be informed on our rights.

Fighting Until We're All Free,

National Women's Liberation

¹ Pew Research Center, Anthony Cilluffo, Abigail Geiger and Richard Fry, "More U.S. households are renting than at any point in 50 years" (July 19, 2017)

Available at: <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/07/19/more-u-s-households-are-renting-than-at-any-point-in-50-years/>

² National Low Income Housing Association, Report "Out of Reach 2018" Available at: <https://reports.nlihc.org/oor/florida>

³ Eviction Lab, "Why Eviction Matters" Available at: <https://evictionlab.org/why-eviction-matters/#who-is-at-risk>

723 N.W. 19 St.
Gainesville FL 32603
April 21, 2019

Honorable XXXX
Commissioner,
Alachua County

Dear XXXX, (name redacted)

For years I have supported you out of respect and appreciation for your commitment to the whole spectrum of quality of life issues in North Central Florida and Alachua County particularly.

It is in that spirit, that I write to express my hope that you will change your position on a critical aspect of the proposed Housing Amendment to the County Human Rights Ordinance. The key text is lines 16 and 17, page 5, of the draft dated 3/26/19: "Lawful source of income does not require a landlord to participate in U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development housing choice voucher program."

If this sentence or any equivalent stays in, much of the benefit of the proposed ordinance will be lost. As we strive for all to enjoy the beauty and benefits of North Florida, not just those like you and me who own homes, this one sentence cuts people on the low end out.

My understanding of your current position is that participation in the voucher program is a burden on landlords. Independently I'm told that the burden is not large.

The bigger counterpoint is this: what about the burden of the proposed language on those trying to better their lives? Is it really good public policy to add to their challenges by a "gotcha" on page 5? That sentence says "Congratulations, here's your voucher opportunity. Good luck trying to use it." Is that the quality of life that Alachua County stands for? Is our ecology and conservation and education and health excellence to be only for those who don't need vouchers?

Please reconsider.

Sincerely,



Samuel B. Trickey

For identification:

Professor (emeritus) Physics and Chemistry, Univ. of Florida
Past President, National Farm Worker Ministry
Co-founder, Welcoming Gainesville and Alachua County

723 N.W. 19 St.
Gainesville FL 32603
April 21, 2019

Honorable XXXX
Commissioner,
Alachua County

Dear XXXX, (name redacted)

For years I have supported you out of respect and appreciation for your commitment to the whole spectrum of quality of life issues in North Central Florida and Alachua County particularly.

It is in that spirit, that I write to express my hope that you will change your position on a critical aspect of the proposed Housing Amendment to the County Human Rights Ordinance. The key text is lines 16 and 17, page 5, of the draft dated 3/26/19: "Lawful source of income does not require a landlord to participate in U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development housing choice voucher program."

If this sentence or any equivalent stays in, much of the benefit of the proposed ordinance will be lost. As we strive for all to enjoy the beauty and benefits of North Florida, not just those like you and me who own homes, this one sentence cuts people on the low end out.

My understanding of your current position is that participation in the voucher program is a burden on landlords. Independently I'm told that the burden is not large.

The bigger counterpoint is this: what about the burden of the proposed language on those trying to better their lives? Is it really good public policy to add to their challenges by a "gotcha" on page 5? That sentence says "Congratulations, here's your voucher opportunity. Good luck trying to use it." Is that the quality of life that Alachua County stands for? Is our ecology and conservation and education and health excellence to be only for those who don't need vouchers?

Please reconsider.

Sincerely,



Samuel B. Trickey

For identification:

Professor (emeritus) Physics and Chemistry, Univ. of Florida
Past President, National Farm Worker Ministry
Co-founder, Welcoming Gainesville and Alachua County

Emailed 3-27-2019

Dear Mayor Poe & City Commissioners,

The Suwannee St. Johns Sierra Club (SSJ) would like to express our endorsement of the Renters' Rights ordinance proposal put forward by the Alachua County Labor Coalition (ACLC). We believe renters in this community are due basic rights and protections such as a safe place to live, freedom from discrimination and negligent landlords, affordable utility bills, and disclosure of their rights and responsibilities as tenants. We also believe this can and should be accomplished without undue burden on landlords or additional financial burden on tenants.

SSJ is supporting this proposal as part of its Ready for 100% campaign. As reported in the 2017 Energy Burden study produced by UF's College of Journalism and Communications, "substandard, inefficient housing is also a factor, particularly in the rental market. Despite more than a decade of community efforts to fix inferior homes, some of Gainesville's poorest renters still live without basic attic insulation or updated, efficient appliances that keep families comfortable in addition to saving them money and energy." Achieving the goal of 100% clean renewable energy by 2050 is possible only if all our local housing stock is energy efficient.

ACLC's proposal is based upon other municipal programs with a demonstrated track record of success, and it builds on services currently existing in Gainesville. While not a complete solution for solving our community's affordable housing or energy challenges, it is a solid start. We encourage you to create local public policy based on the tenants of this proposal.

Sincerely,
Roberta Gastmeyer, Ready for 100% Coordinator
Suwannee St. Johns Sierra Club

Approved at excom 3/14/2019

Dear Mayor Poe & City Commissioners,

We, the Suwannee St. Johns Sierra Club (SSJ) would like to express our formal endorsement of the comprehensive Renters' Rights ordinance proposal put forward by the Alachua County Labor Coalition (ACLC). Renters in this community are due basic rights and protections such as a safe place to live, freedom from discrimination and

negligent landlords, affordable utility bills, and disclosure of their rights and responsibilities as tenants.

The proposal put forward by the ACLC, in consultation with City and County Commissioners and Florida Legal Services as well as landlords, renters, neighborhood associations, faith communities, civic organizations, and other stakeholders throughout our community, is revenue-neutral, based upon existing programs with a demonstrated track record of success, and builds on existing services.

SSJ is supporting this proposal as part of its Ready for 100% campaign. As reported in the 2017 Energy Burden study produced by UF's College of Journalism and Communications, "substandard, inefficient housing is also a factor, particularly in the rental market. Despite more than a decade of community efforts to fix inferior homes, some of Gainesville's poorest renters still live without basic attic insulation or updated, efficient appliances that keep families comfortable in addition to saving them money and energy." Achieving the goal of 100% clean renewable energy by 2050 is possible only if all our local housing stock is energy efficient.

The proposals put forward by the ACLC are not a definitive solution for solving our community's affordable housing or energy challenges, but they are a solid start. We believe all renters in our community deserve the basic rights and protections described in the ACLC's proposal.

Sincerely,
Roberta Gastmeyer, Ready for 100% Coordinator
Suwannee St. Johns Sierra Club

STUDENT SENATE RESOLUTION 2019-111

TITLE: Resolution Supporting the Alachua County Labor Coalition's Renters' Rights Campaign

AUTHOR(S): Senator Zachariah Chou

SPONSOR(S): Senator William Zelin, Senator Felipe Gatos

WHEREAS, there are "almost 14,000 properties in Gainesville on the rental market" [1]; and,

WHEREAS, the Alachua County Labor Coalition (ACLC) is "composed of individuals, unions, and worker-friendly organizations committed to the economic, environmental, civil, and social rights of working people, their families, and communities, and to the ecological systems that sustain us" [2]; and,

WHEREAS, the ACLC has been working on a local renters' rights campaign since last May [3]; and,

WHEREAS, the ACLC is proposing universal, low-cost landlord licensing, basic rental standards and inspections, arbitration to resolve rental deposit disputes, increased discrimination protection, and greater disclosure of renters' rights and responsibilities [4]; then,

THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED that the University of Florida Student Senate supports the comprehensive renters' rights ordinance proposal put forward by the Alachua County Labor Coalition (ACLC).

THEREFORE, LET IT FINALLY BE RESOLVED that the University of Florida Student Senate recognizes the basic rights and protections that every renter in Gainesville is entitled to.

Proviso: A copy of this resolution shall be sent to the Gainesville City Commission, the Alachua County Board of County Commissioners, and the Alachua County Labor Coalition.

[1] <http://www.gainesvilleiguana.org/2018/articles/update-from-the-alachua-county-labor-coalition/>

[2] <https://laborcoalition.org/about/about-us2/>

[3] <https://www.gainesville.com/news/20180519/rental-housing-discussion-planned-may-29>

[4] <http://laborcoalition.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/ACLC-Position-Paper-on-Renters-Rights.pdf>



4/3/19

Libby Shaw
Senate President

Date

March 17, 2019

City Commission
P.O. Box 490
Station 19
Gainesville, Florida
32627-0490
citycomm@cityofgainesville.org

Dear Gainesville City Commissioners,

I write on behalf of the United Faculty of Florida-UF (NEA/AFT/AFL-CIO), the union representing faculty and professionals at the University of Florida.

UFF-UF formally endorses the Alachua County Coalition's (ACLC) proposed Renters' Rights ordinance. This proposal received unanimous support from UFF-UF's Council in its February 14 meeting. In endorsing it, we join a growing number of organizations in our region who believe that all renters in our community deserve the basic rights and protections described therein.

Many of UF's faculty, staff, and students rent. They and other renters in this community are due basic protections such as a safe place to live, freedom from discrimination and negligent landlords, affordable utility bills, and disclosure of their rights and responsibilities as tenants.

Many of UF's faculty, staff, and students hail from states across the country and nations around the world. Those who rent should be protected from discrimination based on their source of income and their citizenship status. The ACLC's proposal contains language to this effect and thus reflects the value we all place in our community's diversity.

UF's employees benefit from having laws that govern their relationship with their employer. Similarly, UF's students benefit from having a Conduct Code, an Honor Code, and a list of Rights and Responsibilities that delineate their relationship with the university.

Likewise, renters will benefit from having a clear definition of their relationship with their landlords. And because both landlords and tenants will benefit from having a process for addressing negligence by either party, UFF-UF supports the proposal's plan to establish a mediation program for rental deposit disputes, one modeled on Alachua County's successful Wage Recovery Ordinance.

We urge the Gainesville City Council to support the Alachua County Labor Coalition's proposed comprehensive Renter's Rights ordinance as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

Raúl Sánchez, President
United Faculty of Florida-UF

University Evangelical Lutheran Church and Campus Ministry

1826 West University Avenue Gainesville, FL 32603
352-373-6945 info@ulcgainesville.com
The Reverend Terrance A. Jacob, Pastor



March 31, 2019

Dear Gainesville Neighbors,

The Congregation at University Evangelical Lutheran Church (UELC) would like to express our formal endorsement of the comprehensive Renters' Rights ordinance proposal put forward by the Alachua County Labor Coalition (ACLC). Renters in this community are due basic rights and protections such as a safe place to live, freedom from discrimination and negligent landlords, affordable utility bills, and disclosure of their rights and responsibilities as tenants. Sadly, there are areas of Gainesville where these protections are not consistently practiced, as we are aware.

The goals of the Renters' Rights proposal are consistent with the mission and concerns expressed by members at UELC, seeking fairness for those in need in our community whose voices are often unheard or ignored with impunity. We have a passion for the well-being of all in our community, reflected in providing temporary shelter and meals for homeless families through Family Promise, in partnership with other churches in Gainesville. Recognizing the importance of good nutrition and realizing food deficits experienced by many in the community, we also support Gainesville Community Ministry and the Food Bank at the University of Florida. We bring fresh produce regularly to St. Francis House from our organic garden, to share the benefits of good nutrition. We support the rights of all for food enough to thrive and decent affordable housing without exorbitant utility costs or health concerns resulting from landlord neglect of the property. We welcome the opportunity to advocate for expanded access to basic, God-given human rights for all people, without discrimination. By virtue of our direct involvement with people experiencing these problems, we therefore fully support and endorse the Renters' Rights proposal.

The proposals put forward by the ACLC are not meant to be exclusive of other initiatives, nor are they a definitive solution for solving our community's affordable housing challenges. But they are a solid start and a good faith measure on the part of our elected officials in a community dominated by rental housing. The proposal put forward by the ACLC, in consultation with City and County Commissioners and Florida Legal Services as well as landlords, renters, neighborhood associations, faith communities, civic organizations, and other stakeholders throughout our community, is revenue-neutral, based upon existing programs with a demonstrated track record of success, and builds upon already existing services.

The supply of affordable housing needs to be increased, and there are a variety of options for accomplishing that goal. We also believe all renters in our community deserve the basic rights and protections described in the ACLC's proposal. Just as employment law establishes a clear set of rules for employer-employee relations in the workplace, both landlords and tenants would benefit from a clearer definition of their rights and responsibilities and a process for addressing negligence by either party.

Sincerely,

The Rev. Terrance Jacob

University Evangelical Lutheran Church, Gainesville, FL

www.ulcgainesville.com

Dear Gainesville Neighbors,

We, the Social Justice Circle of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Gainesville (UUFG), would like to express our formal endorsement of the comprehensive Renters' Rights ordinance proposal put forward by the Alachua County Labor Coalition (ACLC).

Renters in this community are due basic rights and protections such as a safe place to live, freedom from discrimination and negligent landlords, affordable utility bills, and disclosure of their rights and responsibilities as tenants. The proposal put forward by the ACLC, in consultation with City and County Commissioners and Florida Legal Services as well as landlords, renters, neighborhood associations, faith communities, civic organizations, and other stakeholders throughout our community, is revenue-neutral, based upon existing programs with a demonstrated track record of success, and builds upon already existing services.

Our organization has decided to support this Campaign because it is consistent with our religious values that call us to "compassionate service to each other, our community, and the earth" This campaign provides support to both our community by providing more affordable housing and to the Earth by helping save energy and reduce carbon dioxide emissions.

The proposals put forward by the ACLC are not meant to be exclusive of other initiatives, nor are they a definitive solution for solving our community's affordable housing challenges. But they are a solid start and a good faith measure on the part of our elected officials in a community dominated by rental housing. The supply of affordable housing needs to be increased, and there are a variety of options for accomplishing that goal. We also believe all renters in our community deserve the basic rights and protections described in the ACLC's proposal. Just as employment law establishes a clear set of rules for employer-employee relations in the workplace, both landlords and tenants would benefit from a clearer definition of their rights and responsibilities and a process for addressing negligence by either party.

Respectfully Submitted,

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Gainesville Social Justice Circle,

Susan D. Chandler
Alice Primack