MOTION

The Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) stems from the same virus as the common cold and is a respiratory infection that may result in a fever, sore throat, cough and aches, and has shown a world-wide mortality rate, according to the World Health Organization, of approximately 4 percent. As of March 25, 2020 the State of California had identified 3,006 positive cases of COVID-19 in California, 799 of which have been diagnosed in Los Angeles County.

On March 4, 2020 Governor Newsom and Mayor Garcetti declared a State of Emergency, allowing the State of California and City of Los Angeles to deploy all available state and local resources to stem the spread of the virus while being able to access Federal resources. On March 12, 2020, following state guidance, Mayor Garcetti issued a directive ordering City departments and agencies to take additional steps to help slow the spread of COVID-19, and strengthen the local response to the outbreak with measures that include new limits on public gatherings in City facilities, along with additional measures to protect the public health. On March 15, the Mayor issued an Order temporarily closing non-essential commercial businesses and implementing a temporary moratorium on evictions for non-payment of residential rent for tenants who have been impacted by COVID-19. On March 17, that moratorium was extended to commercial evictions. And on March 19, the Mayor issued a “Safer at Home” emergency order, which went into effect at 12:00 am on March 20, 2020, calling on residents of the City of Los Angeles to stay in their homes and limit all activity beyond what is absolutely necessary for essential tasks.

While these orders are necessary to slow the spread of COVID-19 and protect the public health, the combined effects of the virus and necessary public health measures have resulted in significant financial impacts, particularly to low and moderate-income Angelenos. Working people across California are facing layoffs and struggling to pay rent and buy basic necessities. With more than 40 percent of households in Los Angeles County spending over 30 percent of their income on rent and struggling to meet basic needs, and more than 60 percent of households with children struggling to meet basic needs, it is critical that we provide immediate relief and make every effort to safeguard our local, regional and state economies in the long-run.

Tourism, the retail trade, accommodation and food services, the arts and entertainment industries, and manufacturing have been particularly hard hit. The extent of the damage will depend on how quickly the virus is contained, the steps authorities take to contain it, how much economic support governments are willing to deploy during the pandemic’s immediate impact and aftermath, and our ability to free up consumer spending.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the City Attorney, with the assistance of the Housing and Community Investment Department, Chief Legislative Analyst and City Administrative Officer, be requested/instructed to prepare and present an Ordinance implementing a freeze on all rent increases in the City of Los Angeles, retroactive to the implementation of the Mayor’s March 4, 2020 declaration of a local emergency, and effective until the end of the emergency declaration, and call on the State to lift any legal barriers that would need to be suspended in order to effectuate the freeze.

PRESENTED BY: __________________________
DAVID E. RYU
Councilmember, 4th District

SECONDED BY: __________________________