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Sent: Friday, February 10, 2023 3:29 PM

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Subject: Request to Refer Item 10 - Legistar # 74885

*****Please do not reply all*****

Dear Commissioners,

I am writing in regards to agenda item 10, Legistar #74885 regarding changes to the family definition. I am a sponsor of this legislation, and I believe in its importance for several reasons. I do not believe it is equitable to use ownership or renting status as a determinant of the number of allowable occupants. Renters are more than half of Madison's residents, and should not face additional barriers to housing because of it. The current definition creates unnecessary barriers for people wishing to pool resources to rent a space together. This is unacceptable when we have a housing affordability crisis. I am also aware of the real harm caused to individuals and families who have been found to be out of compliance with current policy. For all our work against housing insecurity, we cannot turn a blind eye to our role in perpetuating it through our current policy.

Our current policy needs to change for all the reasons stated above, and I am committed to that change. But recent conversations with the Madison community raise a question worth investigating in my mind. They flag a concern that the change being contemplated will induce a wave of real estate speculation from outside investors. I don't know if this is a realistic risk or not. But I do believe speculative investment from outside investors would be a further risk to affordability in Madison. I think it is worth taking the time to investigate this question and learn more about the risk.

I ask that Plan Commission refer this legislation to a future meeting to give City staff more time to investigate the issues. This could include looking at trends of what is happening in real estate transactions already, examples of what has occurred elsewhere, analysis of different purchase and rent scenarios, and reaching out to experts for their input. I don't believe this delay will require much time – perhaps a matter of weeks. But I don't believe we are doing Madison a service by moving forward without full consideration of the question. If we conclude that this scenario is unlikely in Madison, I feel comfortable moving forward along our current path. But if

we feel the scenario will impact affordability in any area of the city, we must have a serious conversation about the best way to solve the problems caused by current practice.

I feel strongly that our status quo is not the answer. But all good policy making comes with a reasonable investigation of unintended consequences, and I believe this investigation is warranted.

Thank you for your consideration,
Mayor Satya



Satya Rhodes-Conway

Mayor

(she/her/hers)

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