

RESOLUTION TO ADVOCATE FOR A LOCAL MORATORIUM ON EVICTIONS
CHARLOTTESVILLE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
RESOLUTION #: HR20-1

WHEREAS, the Charlottesville Human Rights Commission, hereinafter “the Commission,” acts as a strong advocate for justice and equal opportunity by providing citywide leadership and guidance in the area of civil rights (City code Article XV. Sec. 2-433.); and

WHEREAS, the Charlottesville Human Rights Ordinance identifies housing as a protected activity (City code Article XV. Sec. 2-431a.); and

WHEREAS, the Charlottesville Human Rights Ordinance identifies age, disability, marital status, national origin, pregnancy/childbirth, race/skin color, religion, and sex as protected classes (City code Article XV. Sec. 2-431a.); and

WHEREAS, people with disabilities are disproportionately more likely to live in poverty, and people aged 65 or older make up the largest percentage of the disabled population (Thomas Jefferson Area Planning District Commission Draft Analysis to Impediments to Fair Housing Choice, January 17, 2019); and

WHEREAS, low-income African American and Hispanic households bear a disproportionate share of the cost burden of the lack of affordable housing (City of Charlottesville Housing Needs Assessment Socioeconomic and Housing Market Analysis, April 4, 2018); and

WHEREAS, the average cost of rental housing in the City of Charlottesville is \$1,384 (City of Charlottesville Housing Needs Assessment Socioeconomic and Housing Market Analysis, April 4, 2018); and

WHEREAS, for a family of three at 30 percent of AMI (roughly \$20,700) affordable rent would be \$520 per month, including utilities (City of Charlottesville Housing Needs Assessment Socioeconomic and Housing Market Analysis, April 4, 2018); and

WHEREAS, Charlottesville is home to an estimated 811 extremely low-income (less than 30 percent AMI) non-student renter households, 115 individuals in emergency shelters, and 23 unsheltered individuals (City of Charlottesville Housing Needs Assessment Socioeconomic and Housing Market Analysis, April 4, 2018); and

WHEREAS, on March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization declared the outbreak of the novel coronavirus, SARS-CoV-2, and the disease it causes, commonly referred to as COVID-19, a pandemic (for reference in this ordinance, this virus and the disease that it causes are referred to as “COVID-19”); and

WHEREAS, City Manager and Director of Emergency Management, Dr. Tarron J. Richardson, declared the potential spread of COVID-19 an emergency on March 12, 2020 pursuant to a Resolution adopted by the Charlottesville City Council; and

WHEREAS, also on March 12, 2020, Governor Ralph S. Northam issued Executive Order Number Fifty-One (“EO 51”) declaring a state of emergency for the Commonwealth of Virginia because of the COVID-19 pandemic; EO 51 acknowledged the existence of a public health emergency arising from the COVID-19 pandemic and that it constitutes a “disaster” as defined by Virginia Code § 44-146.16 because of the public health threat presented by a communicable disease anticipated to spread; and

WHEREAS, on August 7, 2020, the Supreme Court of Virginia issued an amendment of the eighth order extending declaration of Judicial Emergency in response to COVID-19, specifying that, effective August 10, 2020, and through September 7, 2020, pursuant to Va. Code § 17.1-330, the issuance of writs of eviction pursuant to unlawful detainer actions is suspended and continued.

BE IT RESOLVED that the Commission hereby advocates and respectfully requests that City Council take all available action within their legal authority to promote a continued moratorium on evictions resulting from the detrimental impacts of COVID-19 on the local economy.

Dated this ___30___ of ___October___, 2020.



Shantell Bingham, Chair, Human Rights Commission