

# Making Tenant Rights Real in Contra Costa

**Nicole Zapata, Community Organizer with the East Bay Alliance for a Sustainable Economy (EBASE)**

# East Bay Alliance for a Sustainable Economy (EBASE)

## Mission

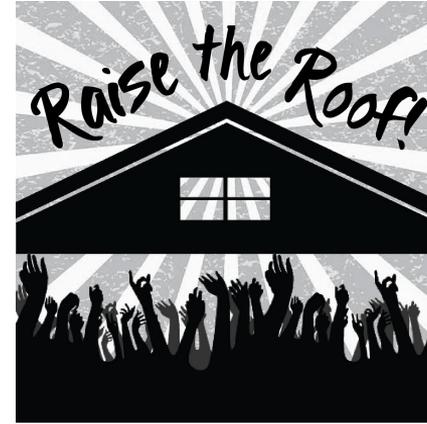
The East Bay Alliance for a Sustainable Economy (EBASE) advances economic, racial, and social justice by building a just economy in the East Bay based on good jobs and healthy communities. We address the root causes of economic injustice by developing strategic alliances among community, labor, and people of faith to build power and create change with low-income workers and communities of color.



# Raise the Roof Coalition

**Raise the Roof is one of many coalitions of community, labor, and faith organizations that EBASE convenes.**

Based in Contra Costa County, Raise the Roof works to ensure that everyone has a home as well as a sense of safety and belonging. We believe that everyone deserves a place to raise our families with dignity. To work and contribute to our community. To live, pray, and play free from the threat of displacement — whether that be because of skyrocketing rents, or ICE deportations.



We are the Alliance of Californians for Community Empowerment (ACCE), California Nurses Association (CNA), the Contra Costa Labor Council, Central County Regional Group (CCRG), sponsored by First 5 Contra Costa, The East Bay Alliance for a Sustainable Economy (EBASE), East Bay Housing Organizations (EBHO), The Ensuring Opportunity Campaign to End Poverty in Contra Costa, The Faith Alliance for a Moral Economy, Monument Impact, and Tenants Together.

# **What we've won during COVID-19**

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# Our Victories

**Eviction Moratoriums** - Contra Costa County and local cities (Concord, Pittsburg, Antioch, San Pablo, Richmond, etc.)

**Rental Assistance** - 3.2 million for rental assistance in Contra Costa, \$540,000 for rental assistance in Concord dedicated to paying 25% of a tenant's rental obligation from September to January (under AB-3088).

**Legal Defense in Contra Costa** - \$1 million funding for desperately needed legal defense for tenants who historically appear in Superior court 90% of the time without any representation.

**Tenant Unions** - Clayton Crossing Unidos and Vecinos de Glenbrook Green



Photo by Brooke Anderson | @movementphotographer

# The Remaining Gaps

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# Loophole #1: Owner Move-In Exception

**Brian - displaced from Concord to Antioch due to “owner-move in” exception in the County’s eviction moratorium**

Brian had been living in his apartment for three years. In August, he received a 60 day notice to vacate the apartment because the owner stated that they needed to move into the unit - one of the exceptions allowed in the eviction moratorium. He later found his apartment unit listed online for a higher rent, meaning that the landlord used this exception in order to evict and accept a higher-paying tenant.



## Loophole #2: “Removal from Market” Exception

**Manuel - Concord tenant who received a 60 day eviction notice due to the “removal of property from the market” exception in the eviction moratorium, also known as the Ellis Act**

Manuel has lived in his home for 10 years. In September, he received a 60 day notice to vacate stating that the landlord was removing the property from the market, after being unable to pay rent. Due to COVID-19, Manuel has been experiencing a partial loss of income. He was unable to pay rent for September and paid partial rent for August. In July, he reported a broken stove in his unit. The landlord took 10 days to complete this repair, forcing Manuel to use the money he had initially set aside for rent to buy cooked food.

In December, Manuel received a court eviction notice. Later that same day his wife gave birth to a baby girl.

# Loophole #3: “Public Health and Safety” Exception

**Jesus - Concord tenant affected by public safety and health exception after parking in the wrong spot at his apartment complex**

Jesus has been living in his apartment for 25 years. He is a father of two children. After parking his car in a “reserved” parking spot and leaving furniture outside of his unit, he received a 3 day eviction notice, with the notice stating that his behavior “constitutes a nuisance and presents a health and safety issue.”

# Loophole #4: Non-Payment Evictions Prior to March 1st

**In Richmond, a gig driver and his family are facing eviction due to the wife's illness prior to COVID-19, meaning they are *not* protected by AB-3088.**

In January, his wife became sick and they could no longer make the rent of \$2,000/month. Since March and the response to COVID-19, they have been having a hard time communicating with the management of their building. The landlord has not given any opportunities for the family to pay the rent they owe and is no longer accepting their rent for the remaining months.

Just this last week, he worked six hours and made \$70 after putting \$30 in his gas tank, meaning he only earned \$40 for six hours of work -- less than minimum wage.

The landlord has now filed for court eviction in the middle of a pandemic.

# Harassment Continues

**Eleine - Concord senior citizen who has been unable to pay rent during COVID-19 and is receiving harassment from her landlord**

Eleine has been living in her home since 2013. Due to the pandemic affecting her husband's income, they stopped paying rent in March 2020. Eleine's income only includes one social security check for \$600 a month. Now, Eleine's landlord has been harassing her for not being able to pay rent -- by cutting off the power in her unit and withholding her mail. On top of this, she is living with numerous habitability issues: mold, broken kitchen sink forcing her to do her dishes in the bathtub, a broken toilet, roaches and mice.

# Rent Increases During an Unprecedented Time

**Clayton Crossing Apartments in Concord is receiving a legal rent increase during COVID-19 while many are already unable to pay rent**

A 300-unit low-income tax credit apartment complex received a rent increase during COVID-19. Many tenants are single mothers living with multiple children, unable to pay rent due to reduction income or loss of job due to COVID-19.

While the Contra Costa County moratorium protects tenants from receiving rent increases during COVID-19, not all tenants are protected by this clause due to exceptions in AB-1482 and Costa Hawkins. Many tenants are exempt from this protection due to living in specific kinds of properties.

**Take Action to Prevent Massive  
Displacement!**

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## CONTRA COSTA COUNTY RISE UP: THE CABALLERO FAMILY IS FACING EVICTION IN THE MIDDLE OF A PANDEMIC!

# HELP MANUEL STAY HOME!



Concord tenant Manuel Caballero lost his job as a photographer due to COVID-19. In July, he reported a broken stove to his landlord. The landlord took ten days to complete the repair, forcing Manuel to use the little money he had set aside for rent to buy restaurant food for his wife and four children. After sending a letter explaining he would not be able to pay rent, the family began receiving threats of eviction.

On September 5th, Manuel received a 60-day eviction notice stating that their landlord was removing the property from the rental market.

At midnight on December 8th, Manuel received a court eviction notice. Later that same day, his then-pregnant wife gave birth to a baby girl.

**All the Caballero family wants is to be able to shelter-in-place in their home of ten years** - but the sheriff will most likely be able to forcefully remove the family and their belongings.

Raise the Roof Concord and the Regional Tenant Organizing Network will be hosting eviction defense trainings prior to the date of the Caballero's family's eviction. **We need your support!**

## BAY AREA TENANTS RISE UP:



The Bay Area Regional Tenant Organizing Network invites you to a series of direct actions to keep our neighbors housed and stop evictions.

With Santa Clara and Contra Costa County experiencing the highest rate of evictions in the region and with COVID-19 on the rise, we need to stay in our homes to stay safe.

*From the north to the south, we're turning out to say:  
NO evictions during a pandemic!*



Sign up for alerts and next steps to support:  
<http://bit.ly/bay-area-tenants-rise-up-21>



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# Extend and Strengthen Eviction Protection: AB-15

- California's eviction moratorium expires on January 31st.
- Unless the State takes immediate action, we face a massive eviction and foreclosure crisis with tenants losing their homes as soon as February 1.
- [AB 15](#) would extend the eviction moratorium until the end of 2021 and make improvements around late fees, negative credit reporting, and the timeline for re-paying back rent.
- **In order to win these critical protections, we need to convince two thirds of the members of the State Senate and Assembly, as well as the Governor, to approve AB 15 by the end of January.**

## PASS COVID EVICTION PROTECTIONS & DEBT RELIEF! Support AB15 and AB16



Stop the Eviction Cliff! Forgive Rent and Mortgage Debt!

**SUPPORT: AB15 and AB16**

Millions of Californians have been prevented from working & will not have the income to pay back rent or mortgage debts owed from this pandemic. For renters, on Feb 1st, landlords will be able to start evicting & a month later, they will be able to sue for unpaid rent. **Urge your legislator & Governor Newsom to stop all evictions & forgive COVID debts by voting to support AB15 and AB16!**

ENTER YOUR RETURN ADDRESS



Not in the US?

START WRITING

You may receive email updates from *Housing Now! California*, the sponsor of this letter campaign.

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# Local Leadership Still Needed in Contra Costa



# Contra Costa Board of Supervisors

**Supervisor Gioia (District 1, West County)**

510-231-8686 / [John\\_Gioia@bos.cccounty.us](mailto:John_Gioia@bos.cccounty.us)

**Supervisor Andersen (District 2, South County)**

925-957-8860 / [SupervisorAndersen@bos.cccounty.us](mailto:SupervisorAndersen@bos.cccounty.us)

**Supervisor Burgis (District 3, East County)**

925-252-4500 / [Supervisor\\_Burgis@bos.cccounty.us](mailto:Supervisor_Burgis@bos.cccounty.us)

**Supervisor Mitchoff (District 4, Central County)**

925-521-7100 / [SupervisorMitchoff@bos.cccounty.us](mailto:SupervisorMitchoff@bos.cccounty.us)

**Supervisor Glover (District 5, West/East County)**

925-608-4200 / [District5@bos.cccounty.us](mailto:District5@bos.cccounty.us)

*Contra Costa Eviction  
Moratorium expires  
January 31st*

**For more information:**  
[nicole@workingeastbay.org](mailto:nicole@workingeastbay.org)

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