



August 5, 2024

Re: Seattle Renters' Commission Appointments

Dear Members of the Seattle City Council:

We are writing to demand immediate action from the Housing and Human Services Committee regarding the long-overdue appointments to the Seattle Renters' Commission (SRC). Despite our requests since the beginning of the year, the Committee Chair has yet to add reviewing commissioner appointments to the meeting agendas. This inaction is unacceptable and undermines the representation of more than half of Seattle's population who are renters.

The SRC currently has only 5 commissioners out of the mandated 15. This is not just a logistical issue but a clear neglect of duty that disempowers renters. The lack of Black commissioners on the SRC is especially concerning, given Seattle's history of redlining and the rapid gentrification and displacement of historically Black neighborhoods. The current composition of the SRC fails to reflect the diversity of our city and perpetuates systemic inequities.

The SRC's role includes advising the City Council on issues and policies affecting renters, such as housing affordability, transportation access, land use, public health, and economic development. The Council's lack of engagement shows a misguided view that the SRC is a formality that can be ignored, rather than a valuable collaborator in addressing these critical issues for our community. This dismissive stance is detrimental to the effective governance of our city.

The Housing and Human Services Committee must prioritize the appointment of new commissioners immediately and address any future appointments promptly to ensure this situation does not repeat. The ongoing neglect not only hampers our work but also insults the communities we aim to serve.

We urge the City Council to address this matter immediately and ensure that the SRC can function effectively with a full and representative body.

Sincerely,

The Seattle Renters' Commission

Seattle Renter's Commission

Website: www.seattle.gov/neighborhoods/seattle-renters-commission

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