



Zoning Commission
Public Hearing on CASE No. 04-33G (Amendments to Chapter 26, Inclusionary Zoning)
Jerrily R. Kress Memorial Hearing Room 441
4th Street NW, Suite 220-South
April 14, 2016

Good evening Commissioner Hood and members of the Zoning Commission. My name is Raquel Colon – Housing Counseling Coordinator for the Latino Economic Development Center. LEDC works to provide DC-area residents with the skills and financial tools that will help people buy and stay in their homes, keep their rental housing affordable, and start or expand small businesses.

LEDC is a member organization in the Coalition for Nonprofit Housing and Economic Development, and helped formulate CNHED's policy positions. We support the platform of the Coalition, and I will be speaking more specifically about our experiences and the pieces of the proposed changes that would most benefit our clients.

As a Housing Coordinator I'm in charge of the education and community outreach at LEDC. I go out to the community to conduct the Inclusionary Zoning (IZ), Home Purchase Assistance Program (HPAP) and Financial Capability workshops. LEDC started working formally with the IZ program in the summer of 2015 – since then we have been educating the community through orientation classes and individual counseling for prospective first time homebuyers buying a IZ unit or property. We have discovered that the IZ program is a good opportunity for both renters and buyers as part of the continuum of housing. It helps to preserve economically and demographically mixed neighborhoods in the District.

LEDC supports the Office of Planning's (OP) proposal to make all Inclusionary Zoning rental units affordable at 60% AMI. Also, we support the proposal to allow developers to build IZ units offsite within ½ mile without special permission, if they provide 20% more affordable space than what is required onsite.

We support an expansion in the Mayor's option to buy IZ units, but also support the suggestion that the units be allowed to be rented as well as sold. LEDC encourages strengthening the regulations about condo fees, to prevent lower-income buyers from being forced out of condo units by rising condo fees set by higher-income owners.

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We look forward to working with the agencies involved in the improvement of the IZ program and the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), bringing the prospective of the community that we work with. We are grateful that this program exists, and we have seen a strong demand for this and other programs to provide housing to low and moderate income residents. We support efforts to strengthen and expand IZ.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today. I would be happy to answer questions about our experiences with IZ trainings, and what we have heard from our clients.

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