

ENDORSE NO ON THE INVASIVE HOMEOWNER REGISTRY

The badly written empty homes tax on the November ballot creates criminal penalties for homeowners, invades homeowners privacy, and imposes audits. **Read to examine the most flawed ballot Measure language shown in red below:**

Every homeowner must comply with new laws

- The Empty House Tax website states that “The empty home tax will not likely apply to you or to the overwhelming majority of people who live in Santa Cruz”. That is misinformation.
- How the empty homes are identified will affect everyone.
- Every homeowner must certify how many days they were home, every year.
- If a homeowner was not home for at least 120 days they owe a \$6,000 tax. Condos or apartments that are not occupied for 120 days owe a \$3,000 tax per unit.
- It’s an invasion of privacy.

Normal homeowners will face criminal penalties

- If a homeowner is in violation of the law, it’s a misdemeanor. **3.38.100 A** states “**Each person or entity in violation of this Chapter may be charged with a separate offense for each and every day**”. A homeowner can be charged with a crime for every day their paperwork is missing.
- **3.38.100 B** “**A court may assess a maximum civil penalty of two thousand five hundred dollars per violation for each day.**”

Every homeowner can be audited up to once a year

- **3.38.030 A.** establishes random audits of homeowners up to once a year.
- The law says “**A registered owner may be required to provide information at any time and for a period of up to three years respecting the identity of the registered owner, the status of the property and the nature of the occupancy of the property. If audited the owner shall be required to submit documentation and evidence**”.

Short term rentals are exempt

- **3.38.40 G. h.** states “**Taxable property registered under the Santa Cruz Short Term Rental Ordinance**” is exempt, and not subject to the tax.

City will face new unreimbursed expenses

- Section 3.38.060. Only 15% of the tax goes to administration, further costs are paid from the City’s General Fund.
- The program requires processing annual records for every property in the City,

The City gains the right to audit during homeowner escrows making it harder to sell a house

- **3.38.030 B says “Audits may be performed when there is a pending ownership change”.** In other words, the City gains a poorly defined role in escrow.

Endorse NO on this Measure, request a yard sign and donate to defeat this intrusive law at www.santacruztogether.com