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MEDIA RELEASE

California Lawmakers Extend Law to Allow Los Angeles County Department of Consumer and Business Affairs to Continue Helping Homeowners Avoid Foreclosure, Real Estate Fraud

LOS ANGELES – For more than 20 years, the Los Angeles County Department of Consumer and Business Affairs (DCBA) has administered the County's Homeowner Notification Program. This program has successfully allowed DCBA to help thousands of Los Angeles County homeowners and tenants avoid costly real estate fraud or foreclosures and stay in their homes.

This week, Governor Gavin Newsom signed into law Assembly Bill 1106 (Smith), which will allow the County's Enhanced Homeowner Notification Program and DCBA's Foreclosure Prevention Program to continue serving County homeowners for another 10 years.

The Homeowner Notification Program was instituted in 1996 in collaboration with the Los Angeles County Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk (RR/CC). Under the Program, homeowners are notified by mail any time a document that changes ownership is recorded with the RR/CC; this includes: deeds, quitclaim deeds, and deed of trusts. In 2013, the Homeowner Notification Program was expanded to include recorded documents involved in a foreclosure, including notices of default or sale.

These enhanced notification services provide homeowners the best opportunity to review the real estate documents to be sure they are legitimate and to avoid fraud or foreclosure. Each mail insert provides the homeowner with information explaining what type of transaction is occurring and instructs them to immediately call DCBA for free information or help.

"Keeping hard-working families in their homes is an effective way to combat the housing and homelessness crisis in Los Angeles County," said Los Angeles County Supervisor Hilda L. Solis. "The County's Homeowner Notification Program often serves as a strong line of defense between vulnerable homeowners and bad actors, and ultimately helps residents keep a roof over their heads and more of their hard-earned money in their pockets."

"I applaud the Governor for reupping this important measure," said Los Angeles County Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas. "We are in the midst of an affordability crisis when it comes to housing in California, so every tool that protects homeowners in our state from losing their homes through real estate fraud and unnecessary foreclosure is a tool that we must fight to keep."

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"Los Angeles County is stronger when families remain safe in a place they can call home," said Los Angeles County Supervisor Janice Hahn. "This law will allow our County departments to continue to assist homeowners in fighting fraud and foreclosure abuse."

"The Department of Consumer and Business Affairs' Foreclosure Prevention Program has saved over 475 homes from foreclosure and helped homeowners save more than $30 million in successful loan modifications or helped with fraud avoidance. I thank Assemblymembers Smith, Bloom, and Muratsuchi, and Senator Stern for championing this program and ensuring the homeowners of Los Angeles County access to this important service," said Joseph M. Nicchitta, Director of the Department of Consumer and Business Affairs.

For more information, contact DCBA by phone at **(800) 593-8222** or visit dcba.lacounty.gov.

Since 1976, the County of Los Angeles Department of Consumer and Business Affairs (DCBA) has served consumers, businesses, and communities through education, advocacy, and complaint resolution. We work every day to educate consumers and small business owners about their rights and responsibilities, mediate disputes, investigate consumer fraud complaints, and enforce Los Angeles County's minimum wage and interim rent stabilization ordinances. For more information, visit dcba.lacounty.gov.

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