

PRO-TENANT GROUPS, LANDLORDS MOBILIZE OVER CITY EVICTION MORATORIUM: OAKLAND CITY COUNCIL PREPARES TIMELINE TO PHASE OUT EVICTION PROTECTIONS

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Landlords held a protest this week at an Oakland City Council meeting calling for an end to the city's eviction moratorium protection, one of the strongest in the state, which was enacted to protect renters during the pandemic. At the landlord rally Tuesday afternoon in City Hall lobby before the council meeting, led by former mayoral candidate Seneca Scott, landlords and landlord organizations demanded council members end the city's eviction moratorium. Former City Councilmember Loren Taylor spoke at the rally. The post Pro-Tenant Groups, Landlords Mobilize Over City Eviction Moratorium: Oakland City Council prepares timeline to phase out eviction protections first appeared on Post News Group.

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By Carla Thomas

The Niagara Movement Democratic Club (NMDC) celebrated their 50th Anniversary at Geoffrey's Inner Circle on Saturday, March 18. The event raised funds for the newly created non-bipartisan Niagara Movement Foundation co-founded by lobbyist-author Virtual T. Murrell the Honorable Elihu Harris, former Oakland mayor, and founding members Sandra Simpson Fontaine, the Honorable Leo Bazile, Anita Williams, Geoffrey Pete and Robert L. Harris.

Bishop Grady L. Harris provided the invocation and the Honorable Donald R. White served as master of ceremonies. The Honorable Dezie Woods-Jones provided a posthumous tribute to Anita Williams, a founding member of the NMDC, whose memorial was held earlier in that day. Founding member of the NMDC Attorney Sandra Simpson-Fontaine also spoke of Anita Williams' dedication and commitment. "She worked tirelessly to move our agenda forward," said Simpson-Fontaine.

The event also celebrated the Honorable Willie L. Brown's 89th birthday. Brown was unable to attend due to covid, but his daughter Susan Brown accepted an award for him. Brown's daughter also led the audience in singing the Stevie Wonder version of "Happy Birthday."

Celebrity guests included the legendary Black Panther Party leader, Bobby Seale and actor Richard Gant.

Virtual Murrell, founder and founding president of the NMDC, provided the organization's rich history of advocacy, comradery and being a training ground for over a dozen elected officials. Murrell explained how he, in 1973, along with his friends Leo Bazile, AC Taylor and Johnnie S. Harrison formed the organization in honor of W.E.B. DuBois and William Monroe Trotter's "Niagara Movement" that began in 1905 to end racial discrimination, segregation and establish voting rights, and equal economic and educational opportunities for African Americans.

"You're standing on the shoulders of those that came before you," said Murrell, founder and founding president of the Niagara Movement Democratic Club. Murrell went on to explain that Black people were one-third of Oakland's population, yet not one elected official of Oakland or Alameda County was Black. Murrell's club made it their mission to encourage, support, and produce Black candidates to run for office. Their movement transformed the landscape of the city and county's politics, resulting in the elected official representation of Black people in the region's politics for the next 50 years. Out of the NMDC came political legends like Congresswoman Barbara Lee and the Honorable Elihu Harris, former mayor of Oakland. Harris joked that he trumped the Honorable Willie Brown by becoming a mayor first.

Historically, the NMDC was created at a time when political power and influence were wielded by conservative Republican William F. Knowland, publisher of the Oakland Tribune, and the former Senate Majority Leader. With the NMDC declaring political warfare on the status quo, the organization produced Oakland City Councilmembers; Wilson Riles Jr., Leo Bazile, and Dezie Woods-Jones, Elihu Harris, Mayor of Oakland and State Legislature, Alameda County Board of Supervisors; Mary King and Keith Carson, Alameda County Treasurer Don White, Oakland School Board representatives Sylvester Hodges, Alfreda Abbott, and Carol Tolbert, California Assemblymember Sandre Swanson, Judge Magistrate Geoffrey Carter, BART Board member, Margaret Pryor, and Peralta Community College Trustee William "Bill" Riley.

In addition to the founder and co-founders, founding members of the NMDC included Shirley Douglass, Edmund Atkins, Art Scott, Irene Scott-Murrell, Anita Williams, Al Roger's, Wilson Riles Jr., Edna Tidwell, Esther Tidwell, Walter Edwards, Sandra Simpson Fontaine, Beverly Brown Spelman, Joyce Wilkerson, Barbara Lee, Michael Penn, William "Bill" Riley, Geoffrey Carter, and Elihu Harris.

Alameda County Board of Supervisors Chairman Nate Miley commended the NMDC with a resolution from the Board of Supervisors, and Oakland Mayor Sheng Thao presented a "Niagara Day" Resolution.

There are no comments yet.