

UPDATE ON THE FLOWER LADY OF BERNAL HEIGHTS'S EVICTION STRUGGLE

CONTACT:

Not for publication: floweladyalliance@gmail.com - Denhi Donis is available for interviews.

Beloved “Flower Lady of Bernal Heights” Denhi Donis Is Evicted & Risks Homelessness While Undergoing Major Medical Care



San Francisco, CA— After three years of community efforts fighting two Ellis Act evictions while battling major health issues, senior artist activist Denhi Donis, also known as “The Flower Lady,” has been ordered to vacate her rent-controlled apartment of 16 years by September 30, 2023.

Studies have shown that elders forced to move in these hostile takeover manners experience declines in health and well-being, so the timing of this could not be worse. She can barely eat, use the bathroom, or work. Donis is struggling to heal due to the stress of having nowhere affordable to go, living only on social security.

She was able to extend the eviction deadline to Sept. 30, 2023, to be home after undergoing two major surgeries this summer, thanks to the hard work of the SETA, the Housing Rights Committee (HRCSF), SFERN (a project of the West Side Tenants Association) and community participation. The problem now is that she is not healing and needs to be close to physical therapy and other medical support. The stress has been monumental.

“I am a senior and a cancer survivor with ongoing medical conditions. My home has lacked heat and a working stove for three years. My request for repairs has gone ignored, and I have spent the last three years worried and overwhelmed with the stress of where I will live if I am to face an Ellis Act Eviction,” said Donis.

Two years after purchasing the building in 2018, Apple tech engineer, Thorsten Gernoth, and partner, Blanca Estela Rodriguez, began proceedings to displace Ms. Donis. Her Ellis Act

eviction is part of the ongoing struggle of too many seniors being evicted under an Ellis Act loophole.

The Ellis Act, a California state law passed in 1985, allows landlords to evict residential tenants when “exiting the rental business.” While the legislation’s authors supposedly intended it to protect small mom-and-pop landlords who could no longer maintain their rental properties, the Ellis Act is most often used by investors looking to acquire rent control housing, evict tenants, and sell the emptied properties for a higher profit. Studies show that most Ellis Act evictions occur within the first five years of an owner purchasing a property.

Denhi and her family are accepting any help the community can provide during this difficult time since the relocation allowance dedicated by current policies is not enough to relocate within her beloved San Francisco.

There are numerous ways to help her cause:

- Donate to her GoFundMe campaign: <https://tinyurl.com/flowerladyfund>
- Volunteer to help in various ways: <https://tinyurl.com/denhimovinghelpers>
- Locate an in-law, studio, or apartment where Denhi could stay for a reduced fee or reasonable rent after eviction (short-term or permanent)
<https://tinyurl.com/donishelpers>
- Stay connected with email updates: <https://tinyurl.com/donishelpers>

Donis expresses that all support is greatly appreciated, no matter how small.