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**EVICTION DEFENSE COLLABORATIVE CHOSEN AS LEAD PARTNER
FOR SAN FRANCISCO TENANT RIGHT TO COUNSEL**

San Francisco, CA - The following statement may be attributed to Martina I. Cucullu Lim, Executive Director of the Eviction Defense Collaborative (EDC):

“I am very excited to announce today, that after a competitive process, the San Francisco Mayor’s Office of Housing and Community Development (MOHCD) has selected Eviction Defense Collaborative (EDC) to serve as “Lead Partner” for the San Francisco Tenant Right to Counsel Program (TRC). This decision is a tremendous honor and demonstrates that EDC and its Board have earned the confidence of the City and its residents as trusted stewards of this program. For nearly 25 years EDC has been the front line of defense in battling evictions, reducing homelessness, and building stronger communities.”

In large part due to the efforts of activist groups such as Tenants Together and San Francisco Tenants’ Union, San Francisco is now the 2nd jurisdiction in the country to guarantee tenant right to counsel, yet our program goes demonstrably beyond the nascent New York City program in the scope of protecting its citizens’ housing. We hope to demonstrate to the rest of the country a holistic model for balancing the playing field to keep families in their homes and communities.

The following is a statement from EDC’s Board President and managing attorney of LEDA Law Firm, Eric Lifschitz: “I feel great pride in the EDC, our dedicated board of directors and city-wide partnerships. Keeping tenants in their homes results in more stable neighborhoods, less homelessness, and greater individual investment in culture and community. Protecting tenants and reversing the eviction trend is essential to ensuring San Francisco remains a beacon of hope for artists, young people and a broad diversity of professions, not just a playground for the rich.”

In its collaborative role as Lead Partner, EDC will be working with the city in interfacing with the Court, and designing centralized case intake, referral, and strategic management systems. EDC will remain the entry point of all new eviction cases, as it has for nearly twenty-five years, and distribute cases to each of the various specialized partners. Further, if other agencies cannot handle referrals, the EDC will remain the agency of last resort: accepting overflow cases and seeking the best resolutions within the funding capabilities.

EDC’s city-funded partners tackling this auspicious voter-approved Right to Counsel initiative include the following long-standing community organizations: AIDS Legal Referral Panel; Asian Americans Advancing Justice – Asian Law Caucus; Asian Pacific Islander Legal Outreach; Bay Area Legal Aid; Justice & Diversity Center of the Bar Association of San Francisco; Legal Assistance to the Elderly; La Raza Centro Legal; Open Door Legal; and Tenderloin Housing Clinic; and.

EDC's leadership team on this initiative will be comprised of its newly hired Executive Director, Martina Cucullu Lim (recruited through a national search and recognized regionally for non-profit leadership), Cary Gold (Director of Litigation & Policy and the EDC's esteemed founder and former Board president who simultaneously developed and oversaw the pro bono based Housing Negotiation Project on behalf of the Justice & Diversity Center of the Bar Association of San Francisco (JDC)), and Mairi McKeever (EDC consultant, also formerly with the JDC and one of the few national leaders with experience in development of right to civil counsel programs), and the Board of Directors heavily comprised of tenant rights attorneys.

For more info:

EDC, please visit www.evictiondefense.org.

Executive Director, Martina I. Cucullu Lim, visit [LinkedIn](#).

Director of Litigation & Policy, Cary Gold, visit [LinkedIn](#).

Mairi McKeever, visit [LinkedIn](#).

Board President, Eric L. Lifschitz, visit [LinkedIn](#).

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