

# Stopping a Rent Control Trigger Law

Case Study **Seattle, WA**

## CHALLENGE

**Convince Seattle City Council Members to reject proposed trigger legislation that would enact rent control at an undetermined time in the future...a tall task in a progressive city.**

## BACKGROUND

In July 2023, Seattle City Council was considering legislation that would enact rent control at an unknown future time if the state government ever chose to repeal a law that prevents local rent control in Washington. This is commonly described as a trigger law.

## ABOUT PARTNERSHIP FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Partnership for Affordable Housing (“PAH”) is a 501c(4) nonprofit organization committed to increasing housing affordability and availability in Washington state. PAH believes that rent control will reduce investment in Washington and make housing more expensive for most residents over the long term. PAH strongly opposes any effort to implement rent control.

## SOLUTION AND SERVICES

With fewer than 10 days before the vote, the Partnership for Affordable Housing (“PAH”) enlisted REAL Strategies to conduct an expedited advocacy campaign. This program included a **text messaging** campaign as well as **patch-through phone calls** to encourage voters in targeted Seattle City Council districts to call their councilmember and tell them how important it was to vote against this legislation.

Two of the eight City Council districts were targeted for patch-through calls and text messages. On each call, the voter was asked whether they supported or opposed the legislation, then provided additional arguments in opposition. Once the voter was engaged and willing to be patched through to their councilmember’s office, we connected them.

282 individuals agreed to be patched through via telephone to the offices of Councilmembers Andrew Lewis and Dan Strauss, imploring them to oppose the legislation. Additionally, another 339 individuals utilized a MMS text message link to send emails to the same offices urging opposition to the legislation. **Both Councilmembers voted “NO” and the legislation failed to pass.**

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- A combination of PAH’s resources and REAL Strategies data and campaign services allowed for an expedited and successful advocacy campaign.
- Efforts that may seem challenging on the surface (such as stopping rent control legislation in a progressive city) are still achievable with smart planning and best-in-class targeting.

## TEXT MESSAGING

**Total Actions: 339**

Messages sent by Councilmember:

CM Lewis: **262**

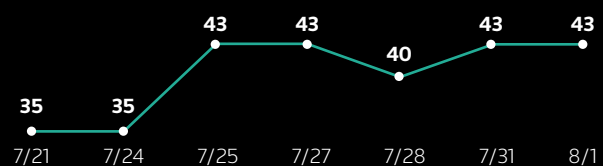
CM Strauss: **120**



## PATCHED THROUGH CALLS

**Total: 282**

*\*Normal campaign call volume ranges between 10-15 calls per day.*



## RESULTS

**On August 1, The Seattle City Council voted down this legislation by a vote of 6-2 – including votes in opposition from both Lewis and Strauss – a victory for PAH and its team.**