

January 19, 2021

Dear Incoming Senate Majority Leader Schumer and House Speaker Nancy Pelosi,

We are a collective of public housing residents, unhoused people, and tenants. We write to respectfully urge the Senate to take immediate and bold action to protect renters and unhoused communities, prevent unprecedented displacement, and to guard against disastrous, 2008-style real estate speculation. We must address the current coronavirus housing crisis, and set our country on a path towards a Homes Guarantee.

COVID-19 RELIEF

- **An expanded eviction moratorium**, including a ban on all eviction filings, summons, hearings, judgments, and writs of execution;
 - The moratorium must go further than what passed in the HEROES Act by including all eviction types, not just those for non-payment of rent;
 - The moratorium must be automatic, not placing burden on the tenants to apply for protection;
 - The moratorium must not allow for criminal prosecution as the result of mistakes or omissions on any declaration;
 - The moratorium should not come with an arbitrary end date, but rather triggered by a set of economic and public health indicators.
 - The moratorium should not affect eviction and foreclosure prevention funds that flow through HUD.
- **Non-congregate emergency housing** for everyone in congregate housing (shelter, jail, prison, youth detention center, group or nursing home), fully accessible to people with disabilities, and individuals, families, and people who want to stay with a roommate or aide. Such shelter should be guaranteed until a safe, effective vaccine is available to all.
- **Rent and mortgage cancellation and debt forgiveness**, including rent and mortgage payment suspension for the duration of the crisis; a relief fund for property owners, conditioned on a set of critical tenant protections; and, debt erasure for the months of accumulated rental arrears. This policy should be modeled after [H.R. 6515 The Rent and Mortgage Cancellation Act](#), introduced by Rep. Ilhan Omar in the 116th Congress.
 - If rental assistance (like the \$100 billion fund in the HEROES Act) remains the favored policy, it must be amended to include the following [principles from rent cancellation](#):
 - Universal access, including for immigrants regardless of documentation status, participants in the informal economy (i.e. food vendors, home care workers, etc.), and others for whom means-testing may be prohibitive;
 - Conditions for landlords who benefit from the assistance funds (see H.R. 6515 for a thorough list), including at least a five year rent freeze and compliance with other critical tenant protections such as just-cause evictions, a ban on source of income discrimination, and more;
 - Cancellation of rent, funding for capital repairs, and further administrative relief for Public Housing Authorities, who lack the capacity to perform systems-wide recertifications to address significant numbers of rental adjustment reviews due to tenants' loss of income.

ECONOMIC RECOVERY

- **An affordable housing acquisition fund** to protect against real estate speculation, including flexibility for cities, counties, states, and housing authorities to use rental assistance funds toward down-payments on distressed properties to be used for permanently affordable housing; and/or,
- A [Social Housing Development Authority](#) to create lasting solutions for the housing crisis by purchasing distressed real estate, particularly multi-family rentals, and financing its transfer to the social housing sector (such as cooperatives, non-profits, community land trusts, and public housing).

HOMES GUARANTEE

We believe that everyone should have safe, accessible, sustainable, and permanently affordable housing: a Homes Guarantee. Our long-term vision for the [Homes Guarantee](#) calls for:

- At least 12 million social housing units (permanently off the private market and not available for speculation, see [H.R. 5244 The Homes for All Act of 2019](#)) and an end to homelessness;
- \$150 billion+ investment in existing public housing;
- A national tenants bill of rights (including just cause, universal rent control, universal accessibility) and a \$200 billion Community Control and Anti Displacement Fund;
- Reparations for centuries of racist housing policies; and,
- An end to land/real estate speculation.

Thank you in advance for your time and attention to this matter. We respectfully request a meeting with you and your teams at your earliest convenience to discuss these priorities. We look forward to continuing to work together to support America's working families.

In gratitude and solidarity,

People's Action, including the following organizations:

Down Home North Carolina
Hoosier Action
Iowa Citizens for Community
Improvement Action Fund
Michigan People's Campaign
PA Stands Up
Safe Return Project
New Hampshire Youth
Movement
Neighbor to Neighbor Action
Fund
Progressive Maryland
Tennessee Citizen Action
Connecticut Citizen Action
Group (CCAG)
New Jersey Citizen Action
New Jersey Organizing
Project
United Action for Idaho

West Virginia Citizen Action
Group
People United for Sustainable
Housing (PUSH) - Buffalo
Progressive Leadership
Alliance of Nevada Action
Fund (PLAN Action Fund)
TakeAction Minnesota
(TAMN)
Colorado People's Action
(CPA)
Jane Addams Seniors in
Action
ONE People's Campaign
ONE People's Campaign
OneAmerica Votes
The People's Lobby
(c4)/Reclaim Chicago (PAC)
Washington Community
Action Network

Living United for Change in
Arizona (LUCHA)
Hometown Action
Citizen Action of Wisconsin
Missouri Jobs with Justice
Voter Action (c4)
Citizen Action of New York
(CANY)
Community Voices Heard
(Power)
Maine People's Alliance
Rights and Democracy - VT
Voices of Community
Advocates and Leaders
Action Fund (VOCAL-NY)
Ground Game LA
San Francisco Rising Action
Fund

The following organizations were endorsers of H.R. 6515 The Rent and Mortgage Cancellation Act, introduced by Rep. Ilhan Omar in the 116th Congress:

Alliance of Californians for
Community Empowerment
(ACCE)
Action Center for Race and
the Economy
AFT Chicago Black Caucus

Alliance for Community
Transit - Los Angeles
(ACT-LA)
Alliance for Housing Justice
Be a Hero
Bend the Arc Jewish Action
Berkeley Tenants Union

Center for Biological
Diversity
Center for Community
Change
Center for Health,
Environment & Justice
Center for Popular
Democracy

Chicago DSA
Chicago Votes
Citizen Action of New York
Clergy and Laity United for
Economic Justice
Coalition for Economic
Survival (CES)
Community Voices Heard
Crenshaw Subway Coalition
Data for Progress
Democratic Socialists of
America - Los Angeles
Demos
Dream Corps
Democratic Socialists of
America (DSA)
Ensuring Opportunity
Campaign to End Poverty in
Contra Costa
Faith In Action Bay Area
Faith In Action East Bay
Faith In Action EB/Imani
Community Church
Faith In The Valley
Flatbush Tenant Coalition
Friends of the Earth US
Grassroots Global Justice
Greater New Orleans
Housing Alliance (GNOHA)
Greenpeace USA
Housing Equality &
Advocacy Resource Team
(HEART)
Housing Justice for All
Housing LOUISIANA
Housing NOLA
Housing Now!
Indigenous Environmental
Network
Indivisible
Inland Congregations United
for Change (ICUC)
InnerCity Struggle
Inquilinx Unidxs por
Justicia
Institute for Policy Studies
Ithaca Democratic Socialists
of America
Jane Addams Senior Caucus

Jobs with Justice
Just Community Energy
Transition Project
KIWA (Koreatown
Immigrant Workers Alliance)
LA Forward
Latinos United for a New
America (LUNA)
Lawyers Committee for Civil
Rights Under Law
Leadership Counsel for
Justice and Accountability
Liberty Community Land
Trust
Long Island Progressive
Coalition
Louisiana Fair Housing
Action Center
Make the Road New York
Met Council on Housing
Monument Impact
MoveOn
National Domestic Workers
Alliance
National Equality Action
Team
NYCC
ONE DC
ONE Northside
One Redwood City
ParentsTogether Action
Partnership for the Public
Good
Partnership for Working
Families
People Organized for
Westside Renewal
PICO California
PolicyLink
PowerCA Action
Progressive Democrats of
America
Progressive Leadership
Alliance of Nevada
Public Advocates
Raise-Op Housing
Cooperative
Raise Your Hand
Rebuild The Dream

Reclaim Philadelphia
Resident Action Project
RESULTS
Right to Counsel NYC
Right to Counsel NYC
Coalition
Right to the City
RISE Coalition
SAJE
San Diego County Central
Committee of the Peace and
Freedom Party of California
San Diego Organizing
Project
Sant La Haitian
Neighborhood Center
Service Employees
International Union (SEIU)
Silicon Valley De-Bug
Social Security Works
Social Security Works
California
SolidarityINFOService
Sunrise Movement
Take Action MN
Tenants Political Action
Committee
Tenants Union of Brattleboro
The Democracy
Collaborative
True North Organizing
Network
UAW 2865
United Neighbors of the 35th
Ward
United Tenants of Albany
(UTA)
United We Dream
Venice Community Housing
VOCAL-NY
Washington CAN
Western Regional Advocacy
Project
Women Organizing
Resources, Knowledge and
Services (WORKS)
Working Families Party
Working Partnerships USA