

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

August 27, 2021

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
United States House of Representatives
H-232, U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Majority Leader
United States Senate
S-221, U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Majority Leader Schumer:

We write in vehement opposition to yesterday's Supreme Court decision, which struck down the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's most recent targeted eviction moratorium. Millions of people who are currently at risk for eviction, housing insecurity, or face becoming unhoused desperately look to their elected representatives to implement legislation that will put their health and safety first and save lives. As your fellow colleagues, we implore you to act with the highest levels of urgency to advance a permanent legislative solution in a must pass legislative vehicle in order to extend the life-saving federal eviction moratorium for the duration of the deadly global health crisis. We must continue to curb the spread of the Delta variant using every legislative tool at our disposal in Congress.

Earlier this month, the world watched as a formerly unhoused Congresswoman, Cori Bush, led several members of the Democratic caucus in a five-day sit-in on the steps of the U.S. Capitol until the eviction moratorium was extended. With just a few chairs and an unbending spirit, Rep. Bush was joined by Reps. Pressley, Gomez, and Ocasio-Cortez and collectively galvanized a people-powered movement to ensure that an estimated 6 million renter households were not evicted.¹ Despite this groundswell of support, the Supreme Court has now reversed its prior decision to uphold moratorium.²

As the Delta variant continues to claim thousands of lives, render people permanently disabled, and cause economic strife around the globe, legislators have an obligation to develop data-driven policies that accurately reflect the dramatic shift in the trajectory of the pandemic. Only 51 percent of people in the United States are fully vaccinated, break-through infections are surging, and only 11 percent of the \$46 billion in Emergency Rental Assistance that Congress authorized to provide financial relief to renters and landlords has been distributed by states and localities.³ What this nation needs the most is time: Businesses and workers alike need time to recover from the staggering economic impact of the pandemic; renters and small landlords need time to receive emergency rental assistance; and the entire nation needs time to heal from the devastating loss of life and health for the past year and a half. The impending eviction crisis is a matter of public health and safety that demands an urgent legislative solution to prevent further harm and needless loss of human life. Allowing an eviction crisis to take hold will only erase the gains we've made and put our recovery further out of reach.

Long before the pandemic, evictions have been a systemic form of violence that disproportionately impacted Black and brown communities, especially Black women. Following decades of stagnant wages,

¹ *Rent Debt in America (based on Census Household Pulse Survey)*. National Equity Atlas. Accessed: 24 August 2021. <https://nationalequityatlas.org/rent-debt>

² *Alabama Association of Realtors, Et. Al. v. Department of Health and Human Services, Et. Al.* 695 U.S. 1 (2021).

³ *COVID Data Tracker Weekly Review*. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. 20 August 2021. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/covid-data/covidview/index.html>

⁴ *Emergency Rental Assistance Program Monthly Compliance Report: July 1-31, 2021*. U.S. Department of the Treasury. Accessed: 54 August 2021. <https://home.treasury.gov/system/files/136/July-ERA-data.xlsx>

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skyrocketing costs of housing, health care and education, these same communities continue to bear the unequal burden of the compounding health and economic crises. Data collected from the Census Bureau's Household Pulse Survey shows that Black, Latino, Asian, and Indigenous households are more likely to report being behind on their rental payments.⁵ Currently, nearly 600,000 seniors and nearly 20 percent of senior renters who are people of color are behind on rent.⁶ What's more, communities with lower vaccination rates and higher COVID-19 cases tend to be the same as those with renters at heightened risk of eviction without an eviction moratorium.⁷

The eviction moratorium has ended. If we do not act, this will undoubtedly lead to the increased spread of COVID-19, more deaths, and community wide trauma. We implore you to act with the urgency this moment demands and include an ambitious legislative solution to extend the eviction moratorium in a must-pass legislative vehicle. We look forward to working in collaboration with you to decisively address this ongoing public health crisis and prevent the displacement of the millions of people, families, and children at risk of eviction.

Sincerely,



Ayanna Pressley
Member of Congress



Cori Bush
Member of Congress



Jimmy Gomez
Member of Congress



Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez
Member of Congress

/s/

Pramila Jayapal
Member of Congress

/s/

Grace Meng
Member of Congress

/s/

Jan Schakowsky
Member of Congress

/s/

James P. McGovern
Member of Congress

/s/

Raúl M. Grijalva
Member of Congress

/s/

Suzanne Bonamici
Member of Congress

/s/

Rick Larsen
Member of Congress

/s/

Mark Takano
Member of Congress

/s/

Betty McCollum
Member of Congress

/s/

Marie Newman
Member of Congress

/s/

Frederica S. Wilson
Member of Congress

/s/

Mike Doyle
Member of Congress

/s/

Nanette Diaz Barragán
Member of Congress

/s/

Jamaal Bowman
Member of Congress

/s/

David N. Cicilline
Member of Congress

⁵ *Tracking the COVID-19 Recession's Effects on Food, Housing, and Employment Hardships*. Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. Accessed: 16 June 2021. <https://www.cbpp.org/research/poverty-andinequality/tracking-the-covid-19-recessions-effects-on-food-housing-and>

⁶ *Data Spotlight: Older renters struggling to make their rent payments during the pandemic*. Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. Accessed: 24 August 2021. https://files.consumerfinance.gov/f/documents/cfpb_older-renters-struggling-rent-payments-during-pandemic_data-highlight_2021-08.pdf

⁷ Williams, Paul E. *Protected from Eviction, Not from Delta*. Social Housing Chronicle, 2021. <https://housingchronicle.substack.com/p/protected-from-eviction-not-from>

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/s/
Diana DeGette
Member of Congress

/s/
Henry C. "Hank" Johnson Jr.
Member of Congress

/s/
Jesús G. "Chuy" García
Member of Congress

/s/
Alan Lowenthal
Member of Congress

/s/
Veronica Escobar
Member of Congress

/s/
Bonnie Watson Coleman
Member of Congress

/s/
Darren Soto
Member of Congress

/s/
Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress

/s/
Nydia M. Velázquez
Member of Congress

/s/
Andy Levin
Member of Congress

/s/
Rashida Tlaib
Member of Congress

/s/
Barbara Lee
Member of Congress

/s/
Debbie Dingell
Member of Congress

/s/
Jim Cooper
Member of Congress

/s/
Carolyn B. Maloney
Member of Congress

/s/
Bobby L. Rush
Member of Congress

/s/
Nikema Williams
Member of Congress

/s/
Alma S. Adams, Ph.D.
Member of Congress

/s/
Yvette D. Clarke
Member of Congress

/s/
Ilhan Omar
Member of Congress

/s/
Brenda L. Lawrence
Member of Congress

/s/
Adam B. Schiff
Member of Congress

/s/
Ruben Gallego
Member of Congress

/s/
Kaiali'i Kahele
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/s/
Teresa Leger Fernandez
Member of Congress

/s/
Dwight Evans
Member of Congress

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Jared Huffman
Member of Congress

/s/
Al Green
Member of Congress

/s/
Adriano Espaillat
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/s/
Linda T. Sánchez
Member of Congress

/s/
Gregory Meeks
Member of Congress

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Ritchie Torres
Member of Congress

/s/
Earl Blumenauer
Member of Congress

/s/
Gerald E. Connolly
Member of Congress

/s/
Robert C. "Bobby" Scott
Member of Congress

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Danny K. Davis
Member of Congress

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/s/
Jamie Raskin
Member of Congress

/s/
Michael F.Q. San Nicolas
Member of Congress

/s/
Ro Khanna
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Gwen Moore
Member of Congress

/s/
Jerrold Nadler
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Brian Higgins
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Mark Pocan
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Mondaire Jones
Member of Congress

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Madeleine Dean
Member of Congress