

To the Coronavirus Response Committee,

My name is Maya R. Nájera Evans, I am 23 years old, a resident of Portland, OR, and I am writing to demand a rent freeze, effective immediately.

Every single person I know who is my age works a part time job that they depend on in order to keep themselves housed and safe. Currently, every single young person I know has had their hours at work either drastically cut, or have been laid off from work entirely due to the effects of the pandemic. My mother, a small business owner, has had to close her business. My sister, who eats free lunch at her public high school, cannot go back to school until the end of April. We were not prepared for this.

The high cost of living in this city makes it so that we are living paycheck to paycheck, with no opportunity to build savings. Now, the renting class is without work, but the landlord class continues to charge us. This is not right. By allowing landlords and property management companies to continue to gouge low-income folks during a global crisis, the state of Oregon is making it clear that their priority is not in protecting all of its residents, only those who are able to afford weeks, if not months, away from work. Please do not let this be true. Take care of your residents. Freeze rent. Please make it so that residents, after emerging from quarantine, after having recovered from the virus, after having watched our elders struggle to stay alive, after having watched our brothers and sisters with compromised immune systems, asthma, HIV, etc., struggle to obtain the life saving resources they require, do not end up thousands of dollars in debt because the state refused to help us.

Please help us. Help! Do the right thing for your community, take care of our most vulnerable. Freeze rent. Now.

Sincerely,

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Maya R. Nájera  
(They/Them/Theirs)