

3/22/20

To whom it may concern,

I am writing this letter to you to express my concern for tenants and landlords during these interesting and trying times. I am concerned for my tenants and their ability to provide for themselves and their families to stay healthy and safe. This is really important to me and my family as we are concerned for our health and safety as well. In order to get through this we are all going to need pull together to help each other out. I have no doubt we will make it through these times but it will cause all of us to make changes in our lifestyles to make it through this.

I understand that there is talk of landlords not being able to evict tenants for a period of time due to the current circumstances we all face. This is a noble thing for the government to do for tenants; however we must consider how this impacts all of us. This opens the doors for tenants to take full advantage of the landlord and refuse to pay their rent knowing the landlord has no recourse. This puts the entire burden on the landlord and basically says "it sucks to be you". I am for helping my tenants out during this difficult time but I also have bills to pay and a family to support as well. I would ask that you carefully consider how this impacts all of us and not just one side. I will continue to have to pay for insurance, management, maintenance, mortgage, utilities and so on, on a monthly basis. I do not expect all these services and business to say to me you do not have to pay your bill. However if we can all pitch in a reduce each of our burdens we can all come out on the other side ok. I understand there is not easy answer to all of this but a beg you not to give anyone a free pass to be selfish and place the burden on the next person. Please consider the following items as you thoughtfully consider everyone that is going to be affected by your decisions.

- Disaster relief needs to be for both tenants and landlords to ensure that renters retain their housing and landlords can continue to operate. Direct payments to landlords will keep the supply chain functioning, including mortgages, insurance, maintenance, etc. This isn't just about making sure that landlords get their money. Housing stability for our communities should be front and center during this crisis.
- A moratorium on mortgage payments provides some relief, but it doesn't provide income. Some landlords depend on their tenants' rent payments for their main source of income for food, medicine and utilities; we don't want to create a new category of people who need help.
- Rental properties require maintenance. If landlords don't have the money to pay for needed maintenance due to the crisis, they may face punitive damage awards for failure to maintain the unit.
- As our government officials pour money into the economy to mitigate the short- and long-term impacts of this crisis, part of what needs to happen is for people to keep

buying goods and services to lubricate the economy and minimize the damage we are facing. Direct payments to landlords for the tenants who need help will be a vital way to infuse funds in to the local economies.

- Not all tenants need help. While many have been temporarily suspended from working, many are working from home, or have resources available to help them weather the storm. There needs to be some sort of needs test to determine whether the inability to pay rent is related to Covid-19 or not. Tenants should have to provide some sort of documentation from their employer that there is no work available, and that unemployment benefits for the household do not meet their needs for food, shelter and utilities. Gathering this data could also provide much needed information to the state regarding impacted communities. This could help inform future planning for unexpected crises that will undoubtedly come our way.
- Other pressing issues for some landlords are current pending notices for bad behavior by tenants, or termination notices issued prior to this time. Can these evictions still be processed and executed, or do landlords have to sit tight while the tenant continues to damage the property, disturb the quiet enjoyment of the neighbors, and even commit criminal acts while being protected from eviction? Also, under current law, once a notice of termination has expired, if the landlord accepts rent for any period beyond the termination date, they waive their right to terminate on that notice. With the implementation of SB 608 and the subsequent restrictions on termination of tenancy after the first year, a landlord could get into a real bind. Can waiver rules be temporarily suspended due to this crisis allowing landlords to accept rent, but still keep their notice valid?

These and other issues will deeply impact housing providers throughout the state and our nation, leading to possibly devastating impacts to rental owners and the people we house. We urge you to consider the unintended consequences of your decisions now and in the coming days and find a middle ground that takes these concerns into account for all of us involved in these trying times. I look forward to making it through this time together and as a community who cares about everyone involved. Let's be good to everyone!

Sincerely,

Aaron Carpenter