



Legislation Text

File #: 0082X-2020, **Version:** 1

To support federal housing dollars to combat the impact of COVID-19

WHEREAS, Housing is foundational to our economy, and keeping our residents in their homes is of the utmost importance, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result of COVID-19, many of our businesses have had to shut their doors, leaving citizens unemployed and consequentially without the ability to pay rent and other bills. The failure of tenants to pay rent also impacts our landlords' ability to care for their families in a domino effect. Over 1,100 evictions have been filed with the Franklin County Municipal Court as of May 4, 2020, and we expect this number to rise once the court reopens.

WHEREAS, Throughout the course of the pandemic we have had conversations with various housing partners that include property managers, shelter operators, nonprofit advocates, and others. They would all agree that additional funding for rental assistance is key to helping navigate the housing challenges presented by the current public health crisis.

WHEREAS, When we consider the inextricable link between housing stability and public health, we cannot afford to overlook this problem. An eviction or foreclosure today will likely have a long term negative impact on a family, including a record that will make it more difficult to secure safe and affordable housing in the future.

WHEREAS, We cannot allow tenants to fall prey to evictions, nor should we let our landlords absorb these catastrophic losses. A thoughtful and complete response to the housing needs of our residents in the wake of COVID-19 is paramount. We are calling on our federal counterparts, to push for emergency housing and rental assistance to be included in the next stimulus package. Cities and states simply cannot do this alone.

WHEREAS, We support the efforts of the group of House and Senate leaders fighting to include \$100 billion for emergency rental assistance in the next COVID-19 emergency stimulus package. Under this proposal, low-income tenants who recently lost employment would apply for financial assistance to be paid directly to their landlords. This proposal would allow some arrearages to be covered, as well as rent payments going forward, until reemployment is possible. This will keep tenants stably housed while ensuring property owners can continue operating responsibly.

WHEREAS, courts across the country will reopen in June, and with eviction hearing moratoriums being lifted, we must act swiftly so that families can remain in their homes and avoid a devastating eviction filing, and worse, homelessness. We urge you to use your voice and advocate for emergency housing and rental assistance to help stabilize our residents and ultimately our economy.

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COLUMBUS: That this Council does hereby advocate to the Ohio Congressional Delegation for a focus on financial support from the federal government for Emergency Rental Assistance and in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.