

# HOUSING REQUESTS

## Congress Must Prioritize Housing Measures in Stimulus Bills

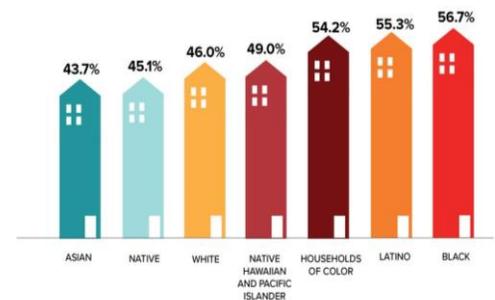
Please include a **national moratorium on evictions** and **at least \$50 billion in emergency rental assistance** in upcoming economic recovery legislation. In addition, please **speak out publicly in support of a refundable renters' tax credit to help families access affordable housing** as a long-term priority.

## The Affordable Housing Crisis in a Pandemic

Millions of low-income working families are struggling to pay rent as layoffs skyrocket due to the COVID-19 outbreak. According to the Urban Institute, half of American households with incomes below the poverty line cannot afford an unexpected expense of \$400. Before the outbreak, families were already struggling to afford housing in the U.S., especially renters of color (right). Some startling information before the COVID pandemic:

- According to Harvard researchers, since 1960 renters' median earnings have gone up 5 percent while rents have risen by 61 percent.
- A worker making the prevailing minimum wage cannot afford a two-bedroom apartment in any U.S. state (<https://reports.nlihc.org/oor>).
- Only one in four eligible low-income households receives federal housing assistance.
- Over 70 percent of extremely low-income renters spent more than half their income on housing.

COST-BURDENED RENTERS BY RACE



Source: American Community Survey, 2018.

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Almost 1 in 3 Americans do not think they can stay housed if the U.S. falls into recession. We urge Congress to provide **at least \$50 billion in emergency rental assistance and enact a national moratorium on evictions until the crisis passes**. These measures will secure the health and well-being of families and communities by helping millions of low-income renters stay in their homes.

We must also look ahead. A refundable renters' tax credit for low-income renters would help increase housing affordability by helping families with rising rent costs. A renters' credit – paired with measures to increase the supply of affordable housing and reduce evictions – would help ensure more families have a safe, affordable place to live in good times and bad. Columbia University researchers estimate that a renters' credit could lift over 9 million Americans above the poverty line. Senators Booker (D-NJ) ([H.R. 4808/S. 2684](https://www.congress.gov/bills/116/house/4808)) and Harris (D-CA) ([H.R. 2169/S. 1106](https://www.congress.gov/bills/116/house/2169)), and Heller (R-NV) ([S. 3580](https://www.congress.gov/bills/116/senate/3580)) in the last Congress, have all introduced renters' credit legislation. We ask that you **publicly voice support for a renters' tax credit** in addition to communicating support directly to House Ways and Means Committee Leaders Richard Neal and Kevin Brady or Senate Finance Committee Leaders Chuck Grassley and Ron Wyden.