

Congress Must Prioritize Housing Measures in Recovery Legislation

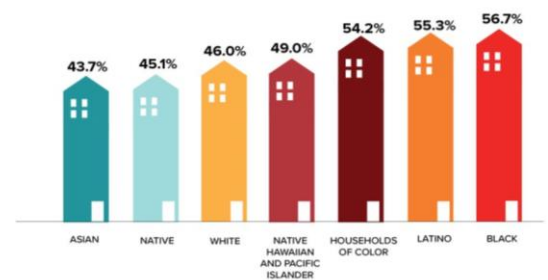
Please tell Congressional leaders to prioritize **\$100 billion in emergency rental assistance and a national moratorium on evictions** in upcoming economic recovery legislation. In addition, as a long-term priority, please speak out publicly in support of a refundable renters' tax credit to help families access affordable housing.

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. Before the outbreak, Americans were already struggling to afford housing (see right), especially renters of color. Some startling facts that were true *before* the COVID pandemic:

- According to Harvard researchers, since 1960 renters' median earnings have gone up 5 percent while rents are up 61 percent.
- A worker making the prevailing minimum wage cannot afford a two-bedroom apartment in any U.S. state.
- Only one in four eligible low-income households receives federal housing assistance.

COST-BURDENED RENTERS BY RACE



Source: American Community Survey, 2018.

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When polled in mid-May, over half (54 percent) of all people express concern that they will lose their housing if they didn't get additional assistance to help cover the costs. In a June 2020 U.S. Census survey, 1 in 5 of all renters, including 1 in 3 Black renters, had low confidence in their ability to pay July rent. The National Low Income Housing Coalition estimates \$99.5 billion is needed to keep housing affordable for low-income renters, including those newly unemployed in the pandemic. We urge Congress to provide **\$100 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 over the next year and preventing a dramatic increase in homelessness.

We must also look ahead. A refundable renters' tax credit for low-income renters, paired with measures to increase the supply of affordable housing and reduce evictions, can help address our housing crisis long-term. 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) and Harris (D-CA) (H.R. 2169/S. 1106) have introduced renters' credit legislation in the current Congress, as did former Sen. Heller (R-NV) (S. 3580) in the last Congress. We ask that you **publicly voice support for a renters' tax credit as a long-term solution** to our housing crisis.