



## Washington State Legislature

March 17, 2020

Dear Governor Inslee,

As the 40<sup>th</sup> Legislative District delegation, we write to express our strong support for you to declare a statewide eviction moratorium. We worry that without immediate action, many tenants across the state may face the loss of their housing and our homelessness crisis will skyrocket. With the COVID-19 pandemic, people fear the potential personal and economic impacts such as job loss, housing and food insecurity, health, and public safety.

We believe a statewide moratorium on evictions could address the concerns of exacerbating our state's homelessness crisis while also addressing public health risks such as increased social contact and possible COVID-19 transmission through increased usage of social services, shelters, hospitals, and other public facilities. People should not have to choose between their health and their home.

We believe the moratorium should:

- Prohibit initiation and commencement of eviction actions and terminations of tenancy including 20-day no cause terminations.
- Prevent Sheriffs from carrying out any existing orders of eviction.
- Cancel all pending eviction hearings and move pending eviction hearings to a future date after moratorium.
- Stop the accrual of any statutory time periods within the eviction statutes such as time to respond to a summons or reinstate the tenancy to ensure tenants are not unfairly prejudiced due to court closures or other barriers caused by COVID-19.
- Prohibit the accumulation of late fees.
- Permit a landlord or other neighbor to obtain a protection order to exclude a tenant who presents a significant threat to the health and safety of others.

We have been hearing from many concerned constituents about the potential impacts of COVID-19, including from people who fear losing their home. We heard from one individual who said "I need to ask you to fight to try to get no evictions and no leases terminated for this time period. I currently have my lease terminated for the date of April 30th and I do not have anywhere to go as of now. This is a terrifying situation for anyone especially with the fear of being homeless and having this awful virus out. Please if there is anything you can do to make this happen it would be more appreciated then you would know."

We join our constituents and plea for your action. We worry that our constituents will face even more limited options than usual for housing as many people will not be moving voluntarily during this time. This is on top of all the usual challenges such as moving costs, sky high rents, tenant screening reports, and other barriers. We as a Legislature prioritized affordable housing and addressing the homelessness crisis this session. We hope you will join us in this commitment by authorizing the emergency eviction moratorium.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Debra Lekanoff  
State Representative  
40th Legislative District, Pos. 1

Liz Lovelett  
State Senator  
40th Legislative District

Alex Ramel  
State Representative  
40th Legislative District, Pos. 2