



July 30, 2021

Dear Senator/Representative:

We write to urge you to take immediate action to extend the federal eviction moratorium to protect vulnerable renters during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Catholic Church teaches that access to safe, decent, and affordable housing is a human right as well as a demand of the common good.¹ We also know that housing is a key social determinant of health, which is especially important during a pandemic. Individuals and families without stable housing have less opportunity to protect themselves and others through social distancing, are more vulnerable to contracting the coronavirus, and are more likely to need acute care if they become infected.² With the highly contagious delta variant now the dominant coronavirus strain in this country, it is urgent to offer eviction protections.

Even before COVID-19, this nation faced an affordable housing crisis. There is an insufficient supply of low-rent housing, and federal assistance has failed to keep pace, with people of color most likely to be cost-burdened by housing expenses.³ It will be necessary to invest in long term solutions for thriving families and a more equitable society.

We are grateful for your previous efforts to keep renters stably housed through robust funding for rental assistance. We look forward to continuing to work with you to provide support for those in need and to protect tenants until this rental assistance is widely available in communities.

Thank you for your consideration,

Most Rev. Paul S. Coakley
Archbishop of Oklahoma City
Chairman, Committee on
Domestic Justice
and Human Development

Sister Donna Markham, OP, Ph.D.
President & CEO
Catholic Charities USA

Sister Mary Haddad, RSM
President and CEO
Catholic Health Association
of the United States

¹ See, e.g., *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, no. 166.

² <https://endhomelessness.org/resource/estimated-emergency-and-observational-quarantine-bed-need-for-the-us-homeless-population-related-to-covid-19-exposure-by-county-projected-hospitalizations-intensive-care-units-and-mortality/>

³ <https://www.jchs.harvard.edu/blog/black-and-hispanic-renters-face-greatest-threat-eviction-pandemic>