



MAYOR ROBERT GARCIA
CITY OF LONG BEACH

July 31, 2020

The Honorable Kamala Harris
United States Senate
112 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

RE: Support for the RELIEF Act (Harris)

Dear Senator Harris,

On behalf of the City of Long Beach (City), I write in support of the Rent Emergencies Leave Impacts on Evicted Families (RELIEF) Act (Harris). Studies have shown that nearly one-third of Americans missed their housing payments in June, due to the economic and public health impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. This critical legislation will provide relief for both tenants and landlords during the emergency by preventing evictions and foreclosures, providing legal protections for renters and borrowers, and strengthening oversight of mortgage lenders.

On March 17, 2020, the Long Beach City Council adopted a COVID-19 economic relief package, which included an evictions moratorium and protections for tenants who experience hardship due to COVID-19. The local ordinance prohibits evictions for tenants who are unable to pay rent between March 4 and September 30, 2020, and renters will have a twelve-month repayment period for deferred rent. These local actions are necessary to ensure Long Beach residents and families are able to remain in their homes during this extraordinary time. The RELIEF Act will further help to mitigate the short-term burden on property owners who rely on rent payments as a primary source of income.

Long Beach is a majority-renter City, with more than 25 percent of tenants paying over half of their income on rent. The City also has an estimated 10,700 licensed property owners who derive income from rentals. The COVID-19 emergency has caused great financial uncertainty and housing insecurity for many Long Beach families. The City supports legislation that stabilizes the housing market by enacting tenant protections and assisting homeowners in the mortgage process. On July 14, 2020, the City Council unanimously passed a motion to support legislation that offers mortgage forbearance through the pandemic, such as proposed by the RELIEF Act.

For these reasons, the City of Long Beach supports the RELIEF Act.

Sincerely,

Mayor Robert Garcia
City of Long Beach

cc: The Honorable Senator Dianne Feinstein
The Honorable Congressman Alan Lowenthal, 47th District
The Honorable Congressmember Nanette Barragan, 44th District