

[DATE]

Assemblymember David Chiu
State Capitol
Sacramento, California 95814

RE: AB 15 (Chiu) – SUPPORT

Dear Assemblymember Chiu:

[ORGANIZATION] writes in strong support of Assembly Bill 15, a critical measure to extend California's COVID-related eviction protections in the midst of a raging pandemic which has laid bare our state's housing inequities. [As an organization which works to address our dual housing and homelessness crises], we urge the passage of AB 15, which will shield California renters from potential displacement, protect the public health, and aid in our recovery.

California's COVID-related eviction protections are embodied in AB 3088, which was passed on the last day the Legislature could act before the expiration of the Judicial Council's moratorium on eviction proceedings. While AB 3088's protections fall short of a fully health-protective moratorium on all evictions, they have prevented a large number of anticipated evictions due to the ever-growing inability of California renters to pay their rent due to the pandemic and our responses to it. Now is simply not the time to allow these protections to expire. In the face of increasing numbers of COVID cases and declining availability of healthcare resources, we must both extend these stopgap protections and begin to address the structural housing issues which have subjected so many families to the real risk of being pushed out of their homes and onto the streets during a pandemic.

In the context of California's surging number of COVID cases, with a new, more contagious variant of the virus arriving in our state, evictions represent a very real risk of exposure and death. Recent research has shown that, between mid-March and the beginning of September, the expiration of eviction bans in some states led to a nationwide increase of 433,700 COVID cases and 10,700 deaths. In addition, on top of the important public health considerations which argue for protecting renters from the risks posed by eviction, the extension of eviction protections is also a matter of racial justice. The pandemic has hit communities of color hardest, with disproportionate rates of both infection and economic loss affecting such communities across our state. We must ensure that a wave of evictions does not compound the negative effects of the virus on these communities, and that all Californians are able to share in our economic recovery without the fear of displacement and potential infection hanging over them. Protecting struggling families from eviction ensures they can follow public health guidelines and will more quickly be able to cover essential household expenses, address mounting rental debt and contribute to our recovery.

For all these reasons, [ORGANIZATION] urges the immediate passage of AB 15.

Sincerely,

[NAME/[TITLE]
[ORGANIZATION]