March 30, 2020

J.B. Pritzker, Governor  
State of Illinois  
207 State House  
Springfield, IL 62706  

Dear Gov. Pritzker:

We are writing during this time of crisis to urge you to utilize your executive powers to blunt the impact of the increasing number of households statewide that are experiencing the loss of wages. As April 1st approaches, many renter households will find themselves in a very difficult position to cover the cost of rent; which will only worsen as the “shelter-in-place” orders are in effect, and businesses remain shuttered and experience reduced revenues. We need you to immediately repeal the Rent Control Preemption Act, establish a “rent holiday” (a period wherein renters will not be obligated to pay rent), and mortgage forgiveness for the duration of the “shelter-in-place” order and the 3 months following to help families retain their earnings in order to weather this calamity.

While we hope the relief efforts enacted will help the most vulnerable Illinoisans, 11% of the workforce in Chicago remain at high-risk of losing part of their wages (if not their entire income) as a result of the “quarantine economy - that’s 391,428 people in one city. One-time pay-outs fall short of the systemic remedies this crisis demands as we see Illinois' infection rate climb, and elected leadership suggests prolonging the standing order to stay indoors.

Communities are unable to respond adequately to this crisis affecting hundreds of thousands of Illinoisans who have and continue to lose wages because an antiquated law stripped power away from local governments and the people. Most of the State, which experienced population and tax revenue losses, is not in a position to send checks to households in-need. Gov. Pritzker, we need you to immediately repeal the Rent Control Preemption Act, establish a “rent holiday,” and restore power back to communities to help everyday people right now.

If there are specific questions or concerns, please feel free to contact Jawanza Malone at (312) 805-4326 or jawanza.bmalone@kocoonline.org.

Sincerely,

Lift the Ban coalition

Eric Thorsland  
Champaign County Board, District 7

Daniel LaSpata  
Chicago Alderman, Ward 1

Byron Sigcho-Lopez  
Chicago Alderman, Ward 25
Rossana Rodriguez-Sanchez  
Chicago Alderman, Ward 33

Andre Vasquez  
Chicago Alderman, Ward 40

Maria Hadden  
Chicago Alderman, Ward 49

Jared T. Miller  
Urbana City Council, Ward 7

Adam Broad  
Vernon Township Trustee

Rachel Ventura  
Will County Board Member, District 9  
Forest Preserve Commissioner

Access Living of Illinois  
Action Now  
Autonomous Tenants Union  
Chicago Area Fair Housing Alliance  
Chicago Democratic Socialists of America  
Chicago Housing Initiative  
Chicago Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights  
Chicago Teachers Union  
Connecting RJ Communities  
Faith Coalition for the Common Good  
Illinois-Iowa Center for Independent Living  
Jane Addams Senior Caucus  
Kenwood-Oakland Community Organization  
Lugenia Burns Hope Center  
Metropolitan Tenants Organization  
MH Action  
Neighbors for Affordable Housing  
Northside Action for Justice  
Northwest Side Housing Center  
Northwest Side Community Development Corporation  
Olivet Baptist Church (Chicago, IL)  
ONE Northside  
People for Community Recovery  
People United for Action  
Pilsen Alliance  
Previous Blood Ministry of Reconciliation  
Progress Center for Independent Living  
Quad Cities Democratic Socialists of America  
St. Kateri Center of Chicago  
Service Employees International Union Healthcare IL/IN  
Service Employees International Union Local 73  
Únete (formerly known as Little Village Community Development Committee)  
United Working Families  
United Working Families of the 50th Ward
CC: Dan Hynes, Deputy Governor; Sol Flores, Deputy Governor; Sean Rapelya, Deputy Chief of Staff for External Affairs; Tiffany Newbern-Johnson, Deputy Chief of Staff for Legislative Affairs; Ramon Gardenhire, Deputy Chief of Staff for Policy