

## **Rent Relief Act**

### **California Congressional Delegation**

“It’s no secret that urban centers across the nation are facing an unprecedented crisis of skyrocketing rents and shortages in affordable housing. If we’re committed to ensuring every American has a roof over their head, we must leverage every tool available at our disposal — few of which are as powerful as the federal tax code. The tax credit created by the Rent Relief Act will put money directly into the pockets of working families who struggle daily with keeping up with their rent — providing much needed relief for families in California and across the nation.” – **Rep. Jimmy Gomez (CA-34)**

“San Diego is America’s fourth most expensive metro region and across the country, rent and housing costs are rising faster than paychecks. We need to provide middle-class renters short-term relief while local, state and federal governments find national solutions. This legislation could easily be paid for by scaling back the tax cuts Republicans gave to those who didn’t need them. This partnership between both chambers of Congress will help find solutions to America’s housing crisis — and level the playing field for those who need it the most.” – **Rep. Scott Peters (CA-52)**.

### **California Mayors**

“Home is not just where we keep a roof over our heads — it’s where we raise families, become part of a community, and create a lifetime of memories. It’s also where we want to stay, and Senator Harris’ legislation would help protect millions of families from losing their homes, by expanding benefits and opportunities for people who pay rent every month.” - **Mayor Eric Garcetti, City of Los Angeles**

“Like many states across America, California has seen significant challenges with housing and the cost of rising rents. One of the cities impacted the most by this cost is my hometown of Stockton, where, in the summer of 2017, we witnessed the fastest growing rents in the nation. The majority of Stocktonians are rent burdened, paying over 30% of their incomes in housing. Once again, Senator Harris is fighting on behalf of working families and has proposed a bill that would bring much needed relief so that our constituents aren’t anxious about covering basic necessities like housing.” – **Mayor Michael Tubbs, City of Stockton**

“Millions of Americans, many of them in California’s largest cities, pay an unsustainable share of their wages just to keep a roof over their heads. This bill will provide badly needed assistance to prevent more people from slipping into poverty and even homelessness.” – **Mayor Darrell Steinberg, City of Sacramento**

“Nearly every Oakland resident who pays rent will save money under this law. At a time when our city is fighting the displacement of long-time residents, The Rent Relief Act of 2019 will help working class families, artists, senior-aged tenants, and anyone else who struggles to make the rent each month. I’m proud to partner with Sen. Harris to fight California’s cost of living

crisis and deliver more affordable housing to all Oaklanders.” – **Mayor Libby Schaaf, City of Oakland**

“We are facing a serious affordable housing crisis in our community, with thousands of families throughout our region struggling to keep up with housing costs. Senator Harris’ legislation would extend critical federal tax benefits to renters and put more money in the pockets of working families to help them stay in their homes and communities they love.” – **Mayor Sam Liccardo, City of San Jose**

“The Rent Relief Act of 2019 will put more money into a family’s pocket by giving a tax credit to renters who spend at least 30% of their gross income on rent/utilities. As the Mayor of a rural community, I know firsthand the struggles families go through to pay their rent.” – **Mayor Michelle Roman, City of Kingsburg**

“Senator Harris’s rent relief act is an effective, common-sense approach to combating California’s severe housing crisis. Relief for renters is a top priority for Long Beach, and this tax relief will help thousands of Californians stay in their housing, keeping our communities healthy and our economy strong.” – **Mayor Robert Garcia, City of Long Beach**

“Hard-working families are struggling to make ends meet in my city, our state, and throughout the country where many communities are feeling the pains of a severe shortage in available affordable housing. Support for these families cannot be put off while we look to longer-term planning and developments efforts for affordable units. The Rent Relief Act of 2019 provides the help lower-income families need NOW to cover the costs of their housing.” – **Santa Rosa Mayor Tom Schwedhelm**

### **Other Elected Officials**

“It’s clear that Senator Harris realizes the serious issues of affordable housing and I applaud her for introducing the Rent Relief Act of 2019. I offer my full support of this legislation. When families are faced with spending the majority of their income on housing, they have less to spend on other necessities like groceries, transportation to and from work and childcare. The lack of affordable housing is not just a crisis in California; it is approaching crisis levels across the nation. The Rent Control Act of 2019 is an important first step to provide help for those who are struggling to make ends meet and have more money available to help themselves and their families.” – **Speaker pro Tempore Kevin Mullin (D-South San Francisco)**

“One-third of California’s tenants are paying half their monthly income in rent. U.S. renters are in crisis. 30% of all American tenants are ‘rent burdened.’ And the prices keep going up. Senator Harris’ Rent Relief Act of 2019 will provide critical assistance to millions of people struggling to keep up with the explosive cost of housing.” – **California State Assemblymember Buffy Wicks (D-Berkeley), Assembly District 15**

“If the Trump Administration can give the uber-wealthy a trillion dollar tax cut, we should be able to put a little bit of money back in the pockets of renters who are struggling to stay in their homes. I applaud Senator Harris for this bold proposal that will provide working families some

much-needed relief in an increasingly expensive housing market.” – **California State Assemblymember David Chiu (D-San Francisco), Assembly District 17**

“The housing crisis affects everyone, homeowners and tenants, and requires solutions at all levels of government. For too long, renters have been denied the substantial federal tax benefits given to homeowners. As we come up with state level solutions for the 17 million people in California who rent the place they call home, The Rent Relief Act would provide additional support for greater equity and justice. I’m proud to endorse this important legislation by Senator Kamala Harris.” – **California State Assemblymember Rob Bonta (D-Oakland), Assembly District 18**

“For years, homeowners have been able to take thousands of dollars in tax breaks while renters have been largely left out of any relief, as they pay a higher percentage of their income on housing. The Rent Relief Act of 2019 is the lifeline struggling families need to keep a roof over their heads and meet basic needs.” – **California State Assemblymember Phil Ting (D-San Francisco), Assembly District 19**

“Cost of living, especially housing, continues to be a struggle for my constituents and I thank U.S. Senator Kamala Harris for her legislation and effort. There is not just one single solution that would magically fix this issue and my colleagues and I have worked tirelessly to address the housing crisis that we have in the state. Any effort that would help the people in my district live a better and more comfortable life is something I appreciate and will continue to support.” - **California State Assemblymember Kansen Chu (D-Milpitas), Assembly District 25**

“Housing insecurity is a national problem, and too many renters are struggling. I’m thrilled to see Senator Harris leading by supporting renters. She understands that the best way to prevent homelessness is to help people stay in their homes. This tax credit will help people do so.” – **California State Senator Scott Wiener (D-San Francisco), Senate District 11**

"Now more than ever our families need support from every level of government; not simply to thrive but merely to survive. They’re stretching their paychecks, taking on extra jobs, skipping meals and bills and are an emergency away from falling into homelessness. We need leaders like Sen. Harris to ease the burden that is weighing down millions of households across the nation. The Rent Relief Act is a step in the right direction for struggling families who are in need of a lifeline." - **Los Angeles City Councilman Curren D. Price, Jr., District 9**

“As policy makers, part of our job is to revisit legislation and to update it accordingly to provide a fair standard of living to constituents. Currently, few spaces in policy deserve more thoughtful updates than our approach to housing. This bill will be a light of hope and relief for millions across our nation who find themselves burdened with the task of making ends meet as the cost of living rises annually.”- **Los Angeles Councilmember Gil Cedillo**

“I represent one of the poorest areas in the nation. Families should not have to decide whether they can put food on the table or pay for their rent. The Rent Relief Act of 2019 will help alleviate this burden on hard working families.” – **Supervisor Leticia Perez, County of Kern**

“As now the world’s fifth largest economy, California is nothing short of a personification of economic success, but high housing costs across the state continue to push many out of their homes. We’re in need of an immediate, viable solution. The Rent Relief Act exemplifies the potential of government when it works to build equity through effective policymaking – to serve those most in need. This bill would ease the financial woes of low-income residents who are burdened with nearly the highest and fastest growing rent prices in the nation. I proudly support U.S. Senator Kamala Harris’s Rent Relief Act.” – **California State Assemblymember Sydney Kamlager-Dove, Assembly District 54**

"When the cost of living has increased but your income has not, we need to find a better solution. When you can't afford a one bedroom apartment working full-time on minimum wage, we need to find a better solution. No one knows this issue better than Angelenos. The Rent Relief Act is that solution. We are grateful for Senator Harris' leadership on this important issue." - **Council President Herb Wesson, City of Los Angeles**

"As cities face the crush of growing inequality and a lack of affordable housing, Senator Harris' Rent Relief Act is a breath of fresh air. We have been focused on building more affordable housing in the City of Los Angeles, but we need more protections for renters from every level of government. Across Los Angeles and across this country, more Americans are living paycheck to paycheck. This bill from Senator Harris is the kind of bold, innovative thinking we need that will really make the difference for working families." - **Councilmember David E. Ryu, City of Los Angeles**

“Rents have increased a minimum of 8% in San Diego and the overall cost of housing is being felt by families throughout the State of California. The Rental Relief Act helps make paying rent more affordable and provides more options for San Diego families to afford and maintain housing.” – **San Diego City Councilmember Chris Ward, District 3**

“I fully support the proposed Rent Relief Act of 2019. For years, we have been undergoing a serious housing crisis throughout the State of California; San Diego County is no exception and in addition to the shortage of moderate to affordable housing for buyers, we have a larger population that is detrimentally impacted by the rise of housing costs - renters. The middle class is being squeezed and low-wage earners are being strangled by high rents coupled with decreasing wages. It is indisputable that wages have not kept on par with the rapid increase in rents. This continues to devastate families and has even forced many out of California. According to a 2016 study by the California Housing Partnership Corporation and estimates by the San Diego Housing Federation, more than half of the renters in San Diego County pay more than a third of their income in rent. Providing these qualified taxpaying families a refundable tax credit is certainly a step in the right direction. I applaud the efforts of Senator Kamala Harris and her colleagues for reintroducing and advocating such important legislation and for taking the bold steps necessary to protect our working families.”– **Lemon Grove City Councilman David Arambula**

## Organizations

“The National Housing Law Project is grateful to Senator Harris for leading a conversation about the incredible burden that high rents place on many families. A tax credit for renters would be a tremendous step towards addressing the problem.” – **Shamus Roller, Executive Director of the National Housing Law Project**

“Nearly half of California households are renters and more than half of renters are paying more than 50% of their incomes for rent and utilities. Unfortunately, renters, who are lower income and lower wealth than homeowners, receive no tax relief on their returns. Many are one economic shock away from becoming homeless. This is a grave injustice. The Rent Relief Act will begin to provide some equity and fairness for tenants, whether they live in the state’s large cities or rural communities. We strongly applaud Senator Harris for introducing this critically important measure.” -- **Rob Wiener, Executive Director of the California Coalition for Rural Housing**

“The Rent Relief Act of 2019 will help the rent burdened families we serve who struggle to afford rents in high cost San Francisco. The relief it affords may make the difference between being able to stay housed in dignity or being displaced.” – **Mission Economic Development Agency (MEDA)**

“Many community college students struggle to find safe and affordable housing. Stable rent prices will expand Compton College students’ access to viable housing and increase their chance for success in higher education. With one less thing to worry about, our students can focus on their studies and fulfill their goals of attaining a college degree or certificate.” – **Keith Curry, President and CEO of Compton College**

"I commend Sen. Kamala Harris for her effort to help ease the financial burden for low income working families, seniors and disabled individuals who receive rental assistance through our housing programs. Providing a refundable tax credit of the value of one month's rent for eligible renters in public housing programs places these families on a more stable foundation to maintain their housing and pursue opportunities to thrive in their communities." – **La Shelle Dozier, Executive Director of the Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency**

“The Rent Relief Act re-introduced by U.S. Senator Kamala D. Harris is an important policy proposal that will bring much needed help to many low-income families, including those residing in our Eastside of Los Angeles community. A large number of Latino residents of all ages are directly impacted by the housing affordability crisis in Los Angeles County - pushing many into homelessness. The Rent Relief Act is a bold solution to a mounting emergency.” – **Maria Brenes, Executive Director for InnerCity Struggle**

“As a community based organization in City Heights, where 77% of the residents are renters, we fully support Senator Harris’ bill to provide needed rent relief for working class tax payers. The Rent Relief Act of 2019 will improve the economic well-being of families by easing their rent burden during this California housing crisis.” - **Laura Ann Fernea, Executive Director at City Heights Community Development Corporation**

“In California more than 3 million households pay more than 30 percent of their income toward rent and more than 1.5 million households are severely rent burdened – meaning they pay more than 50 percent of their income in rent. These families are living paycheck-to-paycheck and barely afford essential items like groceries, health care and school supplies, much less save money for higher education or homeownership. I commend Senator Harris for introducing this legislation to help these families build a better future.” – **Ricardo Flores, Executive Director, Local Initiatives Support Corporation, LISC San Diego**