

United States House of Representatives  
Committee on Financial Services  
2129 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

July 1, 2021

Name  
Title  
Company  
Street Address  
City, State Zip Code

NAME:

Since the beginning of the pandemic, I have made it my top priority to ensure people across the country are protected from both the health and economic effects of the coronavirus, including families struggling to keep a roof over their head and landlords who are struggling to pay their bills and maintain their properties. I listened to both landlords and renters who told me invariably that what they needed to make it through this pandemic was emergency rental assistance. I understood how a rising eviction crisis would hurt both renters and landlords and ultimately our national economic recovery, so I led the effort as Chairwoman of the House Committee on Financial Services to secure \$46.6 billion in emergency rental assistance between both the December aid package and the American Rescue Plan. While this funding represents a historic investment in housing stabilization for our nation's renters, communities are still working to distribute this much-needed relief to the more than 7 million people who remain unable to pay their rent and who are disproportionately people of color.<sup>1</sup> The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) also recognized the public health implications that a wave of evictions would have during a pandemic and the time it would take for assistance to reach households, so they responded by expanding and later extending the federal eviction moratorium established by Congress in the CARES Act to protect more renters.

Despite these protections, some corporate landlords, including your company, have continued to file evictions against renters, many of whom are disproportionately Black and Latinx. Since September 2020, when the moratorium went into effect, corporate landlords have filed more than 70,000 evictions.<sup>2</sup> It has been reported during this time that your company is among the top landlords in moving to evict tenants.<sup>3</sup> Now that the Biden administration has announced a final extension of the moratorium until July 31, 2021, I am deeply concerned about the actions your company might take during the remaining period of the moratorium and once it is lifted. My Committee has held hearings on evictions in the U.S. and the impact they can have on families. An eviction can disrupt virtually every aspect of a family's life, putting them at greater risk of job loss and chronic homelessness. Housing instability can be particularly traumatic for young children and can have lifelong impacts, including through disruptions to their education. An eviction can also haunt people for years in the form of court records and damaged credit histories that

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, [Week 31 Household Pulse Survey: May 26 – June 7](#) (June 16, 2021).

<sup>2</sup> Private Equity Stakeholder Project, [Evictions Continue Despite Ongoing Federal Moratorium; Veterans Hard Hit: May 2021 Evictions Data](#) (June 1, 2021).

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*

threaten their long-term financial health. Ultimately, many families with evictions on their records cannot find another home and fall into homelessness. The ripple effects of these evictions have dire implications for our national economic recovery as well as racial and economic inequality in this country.

Given what is at stake, I call on you to halt these harmful and unjust practices and instead work to connect your tenants to the emergency rental assistance that I worked to obtain in cooperation with your industry trade associations, tenant advocates and low-income housing advocates, and other stakeholders across the housing spectrum. Where necessary, this must include applying for relief on your tenants' behalf and sharing information regarding their rights.<sup>4</sup> My Committee will continue to work to stabilize the housing sector as the nation emerges from the pandemic, and to ensure that the policies of the government are faithfully executed.

Sincerely,



MAXINE WATERS  
Chairwoman

CC: The Honorable Patrick McHenry, Ranking Member, Committee on Financial Services

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<sup>4</sup> The Department of the Treasury (<https://home.treasury.gov/policy-issues/coronavirus/assistance-for-state-local-and-tribal-governments/emergency-rental-assistance-program/program-index>) and the National Low Income Housing Coalition (<https://nlihc.org/rental-assistance>) have created databases where you can identify local programs and how to apply for assistance on behalf of renters. The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (<https://www.consumerfinance.gov/coronavirus/mortgage-and-housing-assistance/renter-protections/>) has compiled resources for renters regarding their rights and resources available to them during the pandemic.