



Community Organizations Call on Governor Carney to Prevent Mass Evictions Amid COVID-19

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Thursday, April 30, 2020

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Wilmington, Delaware — The Delaware and 19 other American Civil Liberties Union affiliates sent letters today to local elected officials across the country urging them to issue or expand statewide moratoria against evictions and utility shut-offs and commit to preventing mass evictions after these moratoria end.

Across the nation, the COVID-19 pandemic has already resulted in widespread and devastating economic consequences, as unemployment claims continue to climb. In the face of staggering unemployment numbers, millions of tenants face the imminent threat of losing their homes or access to utility services due to the inability to pay. The ACLU is calling for the prevention of mass evictions in the midst of this global COVID-19 public health crisis.

Karen Lantz, ACLU of Delaware Legal and Policy Director: “Enabling a situation where people can be evicted en masse when Delaware’s emergency order is lifted is irresponsible. Our state has been a national leader on this issue through the public health emergency, but we can - and should - do more to ensure that those protections extend beyond the limits of our current state of emergency.”

The letter from the Delaware affiliate is cosigned by the Building People Power Campaign, Coalition to Dismantle the New Jim Crow, Community Legal Aid Society, Congregation Beth Emeth, Delaware Campaign to End Debtors’ Prison, Delaware Center for Justice, Delaware Coalition Against Domestic Violence, Delaware United, H.O.M.E.S. Campaign, Housing Alliance Delaware, Network Delaware, Safe Communities Coalition,



Southern Delaware Alliance for Racial Justice, The Partnership for Healthy Communities at the University of Delaware, Unitarian Universalist Delaware Advocacy Network, Westminster Presbyterian Church Peace and Justice Work Group, Wilmington Community Advisory Council, Wilmington HOPE Commission, and YWCA Delaware.

The letter calls on Governor Carney to expand his moratorium on evictions and utility shut-offs and act to prevent mass evictions after the moratorium ends by:

- Halting every stage of the eviction process;
- Continuing to prevent mass evictions during and after the pandemic;
- Prohibiting utility shut-offs and requiring restoration of previously disconnected services;
- Protecting tenants from black-listing because they face eviction after the moratorium ends; and
- Prohibiting the collection of late fees and retaliation against tenants who assert their rights under the moratorium.

“As millions of people lose their jobs as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, renters are faced with the added threat of being put out of their homes or cut off from access to utilities during a global crisis,” said **Sandra Park, senior attorney at the ACLU**. “Evictions and utility shut-offs will disproportionately harm communities of color, and particularly, women of color. All residents — regardless of their circumstances or background — should have access to safe and stable housing throughout the course of this ongoing public health crisis.”

The ACLU has worked over the years to address [unfair eviction screening policies](#), which disproportionately undermine housing opportunities for women of color and will present a barrier to safe housing opportunities if mass evictions take place. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Karen Lantz, Legal and Policy Director, ACLU-DE, at klantz@aclu-de.org and John Whitelaw, Advocacy Director, CLASI, at jwhitelaw@declasi.org. Thank you in advance for your time.

Letter to Governor Carney is here: https://www.aclu-de.org/sites/default/files/aclu_letter_to_carney_on_eviction_crisis.pdf

This release can be found online here: <https://www.aclu-de.org/en/news/community-organizations-call-governor-carney-prevent-mass-evictions-amid-covid-19>