



# CITY OF HOUSTON

**Sylvester Turner**

Mayor

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May 8, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker of the House  
1237 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Senate Majority Leader  
317 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Majority Leader McConnell:

Communities nationwide are experiencing massive economic dislocation due to the coronavirus. Here in Texas, we are experiencing a dual shock with the COVID-19 crisis and the collapse in oil prices. As with any economic calamity, the people clinging to the bottom of the socio-economic rung are the most vulnerable.

I applaud federal and state efforts to halt evictions as people struggle to meet their families' basic needs. Here in Houston, we were able to dedicate \$15 million in federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security ("CARES") Act dollars toward rental assistance. The funds will be administered by Houston nonprofit, BakerRipley.

This assistance is welcome but won't come close to meeting the demand. We are trying to do the most we can with the little that we have. More must be done to keep our most vulnerable citizens from losing their housing through no fault of their own.

As you contemplate a Phase 4 to the CARES Act, I urge you to adopt proposals from the House Financial Services Committee and dedicate \$100 billion to an Emergency Rental Assistance Fund and \$75 billion to a Homeowner Assistance Fund to avert a looming wave of evictions and foreclosures. Further, I urge you to extend the eviction and foreclosure moratorium to all renters and borrowers and mortgage forbearance available to all homeowners.

If we allow our fellow citizens to lose their housing, the economic and social costs will reverberate for years to come. I urge you to add these worthy proposals to Phase 4 of the Cares Act.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sylvester Turner".

Sylvester Turner

Mayor