



SEATTLE CITY COUNCIL | DISTRICT 3

## COUNCILMEMBER KSHAMA SAWANT

Thursday, March 12, 2020

To: Mayor Jenny Durkan

CC: Deputy Mayor Casey Sixkiller  
Deputy Mayor Michael Fong  
Seattle City Councilmembers

Dear Mayor Durkan:

Yesterday afternoon I sent you an urgent letter calling on you to take immediate action to help renters, homeowners, and struggling small businesses from the ravages of the Coronavirus crisis.

**In just the last 24 hours since I sent that letter to you, more than 3,400 residents have signed on to [the online grassroots petition initiated from my office](#), demanding that you use the emergency powers that the Council has given you to immediately:**

- 1. Ban all economic evictions and late fees – for both residential and struggling small business renters.**
- 2. Ban all coronavirus-related home foreclosures.**
- 3. Require landlords, utilities, and residential mortgage-holders to work out payment plans that allow tenants and homeowners who are suffering economically due to the coronavirus epidemic up to 24 months to fulfill their payment obligations.** Without reasonable repayment plans and timelines, tenants and homeowners will face crushing debt once the crisis is over.
- 4. Require all residential landlords to extend expiring leases** until at least three months after the end date of the emergency declaration.

**[I am linking to a copy of this grassroots petition to you, with more than 3,400 signatures as of 5:15 pm.](#)** More are coming in every minute, and I will continue forwarding them to your office.

Other governments are acting. Earlier this week, the [San Jose City Council adopted a 30-day moratorium on evictions](#). Italy has [suspended mortgage payments](#). [Evictions have been halted](#) in Miami-Dade County, Florida.

Seattle must act, by immediately stopping evictions and foreclosures, by requiring tenants and homeowners be given time to make up their payment obligations, and by requiring landlords to extend expiring leases.

The status quo under capitalism is deeply hostile to the majority of working people, and it would be unconscionable to place the further burden of the Coronavirus crisis on those who are already the most economically stressed.

In Seattle right now, tens of thousands of workers – gig economy workers, service economy workers, small business workers, workers in entertainment industries, retail workers, office workers, and others – are waking up worried about basic survival. Without the City's immediate intervention, renters will be evicted and small business owners will go bankrupt. The human cost will be incalculable.

I urge you to heed the demands of thousands of Seattle's working people, and also struggling small businesses, and take these steps immediately in order to provide the basic economic security that our community needs and deserves during this historic crisis.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kshama', written in a cursive style.

Kshama Sawant