

It is imperative to extend the eviction moratorium, and to expand assistance programs for low income households, who are unable to pay back rent owed since April 2020, and for landlords who deserve compensation for unpaid rents that will be partially forgiven anyway.

The economic and social impacts of the ongoing public health crisis are already visibly present : increased homelessness, poverty, food insecurity, unemployment, reduced access to health and social services. In the near future, to improve these crises and prevent more from happening, State policies will need to include support for tenants with no way to pay back the rent, for unemployed workers with fewer job prospects and no way to pay off student debt or mortgage payments, for small business owners facing bankruptcy and foreclosure.

Opportunities are right in front of us: use the knowledge and lived experience of those who are surviving in communities. Help the housed stay in their homes by paying their bills or forgiving debt, provide support for people outside and bring them in. So many properties are boarded up and vacant. And in front of those buildings, people are sleeping under polyester and plastic tarps. Do we really want more of this inhumanity?

Please fund programs that help and acknowledge people's needs, that rebuild communities and neighborhoods that are the most affected by a year of collective crises, and set back by decades of redlining and centuries of oppression.

Prioritize human rights as a legal perspective and ethical framework of policy and decision making. Housing is a human right, but for forty years we have ignored the increase in numbers of unsheltered individuals, the insufficient number of affordable housing options, and the inability of social services, mental health and public assistance programs to meet an ever increasing demand.

Expand outreach and mobile health teams to check in with people left out of jobs, out of care, out of political debates, and outside of the daily life that housed people with jobs and savings take for granted. Give everyone the home they want to live in, treat medical needs in transitional housing, expand vouchers for retirement communities and other properties.

Why not shift support from wealthy property owners, promising luxury investments and business oriented solutions for the well-off who have prevented the economic progress of those communities they displaced, to people with no income, the working poor, unemployed, disabled and elderly.

Equitable and needs-based solutions that are people-oriented are the only way out of crises.