

U.S. Sen. Baldwin: Helps introduce legislation to help renters during the coronavirus pandemic

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WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Senator Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) joined her colleagues, led by Senator Sherrod Brown (D-OH), Ranking Member of the Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, in announcing new legislation, the [Emergency Rental Assistance and Rental Market Stabilization Act of 2020](#). The bill would establish an Emergency Rental Assistance program to provide \$100 billion in emergency rental assistance to help families and individuals pay their rent and remain housed during and after the Coronavirus (COVID-19) crisis. Stabilizing renters and the rental market through this crisis will help the economy recover from the economic aftershocks of the pandemic.

“As the coronavirus pandemic continues to impact communities in Wisconsin and around the nation, we need to make sure families have stable, affordable housing,” **said Senator Baldwin**. “No one should be forced out of their homes during a global pandemic. That’s why I’m working with my colleagues to make sure every renter can maintain their housing, stay safe and get through this economic and public health crisis.”

“This pandemic is yet another painful reminder of just how vulnerable millions of workers are to a single setback – whether it is losing your job, a broken-down car, or just being late on rent,” **said Senator Brown**. “Congress must act now to keep families in their homes. That’s why I am introducing the *Emergency Rental Assistance and Rental Market Stabilization Act of 2020* to ensure that renters remain safely and affordably housed during and after this crisis.”

Specifically, the bill would:

- Authorize \$100 billion for an Emergency Rental Assistance program to help families and individuals pay their rent and utility bills and remain housed during and after the COVID-19 crisis.
- The program would send funds to communities, states, and tribes through an existing federal temporary rental assistance program to facilitate the rapid distribution of funds through an already-available administrative and reporting system.

The Senate bill is also cosponsored by Senators Chris Van Hollen (D-MD), Brian Schatz (D-HI), Catherine Cortez Masto (D-NV), Elizabeth Warren (D-MA), Bob Menendez (D-NJ), Tina Smith (D-MN), Jack Reed (D-RI), Ron Wyden (D-OR), Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY), Patty Murray (D-WA), Jeffrey A. Merkley (D-OR), Mazie Hirono (D-HI), Edward J. Markey (D-MA), Maggie Hassan (D-NH), Kamala D. Harris (D-CA), Cory A. Booker (D-NJ), Dianne Feinstein (D-CA), Debbie Stabenow (D-MI), Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), Dick Durbin (D-IL), Patrick Leahy (D-VT), Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Bernie Sanders (I-VT), and Michael F. Bennet (D-CO). The legislation was introduced in the House of Representatives by Congresswoman Maxine Waters (D-CA), Chairwoman of the House Committee on Financial Services, and Congressman Denny Heck (D-WA).

More information about the *Emergency Rental Assistance and Rental Market Stabilization Act of 2020* can be found [here](#). The bill has been [endorsed](#) by a diverse list of housing, state and local government, child advocacy, faith, health care, women's, civil rights, disability rights, and social welfare organizations. These groups include the National Alliance to End Homelessness, National Low Income Housing Coalition, Children's Defense Fund, U.S. Conference of Mayors, National Association of Counties, National Urban League, and National League of Cities.

"Even before the coronavirus, 11 million renters – including 8 million of America's lowest-income seniors, people with disabilities, low-wage workers and other individuals – were paying at least half of their limited incomes to keep a roof over

their heads, leaving them one financial crisis away from eviction and, in worst cases, homelessness. For many, this pandemic is that financial crisis,” **stated Diane Yentel, president and CEO of the National Low Income Housing Coalition.** “Congress should be doing everything they can to keep people stably housed during and after this public health emergency by implementing a national moratorium on evictions and providing at least \$100 billion in rental assistance.”

“Given the health and economic tsunami the COVID pandemic represents for low income and minority Americans, this rental assistance bill is essential,” **stated Nan Roman, President, National Alliance to End Homelessness.** “Without it, many who were living on the edge prior to the pandemic will fall into homelessness as eviction moratoria and emergency financial assistance disappear. The National Alliance to End Homelessness fully supports this initiative to stave off a massive post-pandemic increase in homelessness.”

“We know that eviction is a cause, not just a consequence, of poverty,” **said Matthew Desmond, Maurice P. Daring Professor of Sociology Princeton University and Principal Investigator of the Eviction Lab.** “Permitting millions of renters to be evicted during this crisis would only deepen the struggle to recover from the health and economic consequences of the coronavirus. I strongly support the *Emergency Rental Assistance and Rental Market Stabilization Act*, which will provide the rental assistance that families and individuals need to interrupt this vicious cycle.”

An online version of this release is available [here](#).

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