



Senate State Affairs Committee Testimony Liz Peetz

June 10, 2020 – HB 1410 SUPPORT

Good morning members of the State Affairs Committee. My name is Liz Peetz and I'm here representing more than 26,000 members of the Colorado Association of REALTORS® statewide. We are strong advocates for affordable homeownership for all Coloradans. I want to thank the bill sponsors for bringing such an important bill forward today that equally balances the needs of the tenant and the homeowner. We are in full support of HB20-1410.

We are encouraged to see over 19 million federal CARES Act dollars prioritized to keep people in their homes whether they rent or own a mortgage because when you are not able to be safer at home, it immediately impacts your health, your wellbeing, and your ability to provide for your family needs. The bill cleanly allocates federal dollars in a way that would allow a landlord or a tenant to utilize funds and ensures that several of our pressing housing needs are addressed as Covid-19 exacerbates the affordable housing problem that Colorado was facing before the pandemic. This financial assistance will help some of our most vulnerable Coloradans who do not have four walls, it will help our housing providers in our housing market economy so that we preserve and increase the amount of affordable housing available to Coloradans, and it will help the Coloradans who are in danger of losing their homes or their apartments due to lost income.

Additionally, the threshold of 100% AMI means that it will reach into our middle class essential civil servants who are out there on the frontlines for the rest of us during this pandemic. Moreover, as

the federal government continues to work to address the significant problem of mortgage servicers having enough cash reserves to cover the mortgage forbearances allowed under the CARES Act (that could ultimately entail over 25% of mortgages in the country), legislation such as this is critical to help shore up Coloradans' abilities to stay in their homes and make mortgage payments because it will stave off a large foreclosure crisis.

The Colorado Association of REALTORS® is in full support of this legislation. It is more important now than ever that we maintain the existing supply of affordable housing and work to improve the livelihoods of our citizens for the future when this pandemic is long gone. Thank you for your consideration.



June 8, 2020

Please Support SB20-1410, Covid-19 Related Housing Assistance

Dear Member of the House State, Veterans, and Military Affairs Committee,

MAAH supports Senate Bill SB20-1410

Mothers Advocate for Affordable Housing (MAAH) is a coalition of concerned business professionals, civic leaders, and citizens working to create affordable housing solutions in Colorado. MAAH's work is about recognizing the affordable housing challenge in our community and working towards better solutions so families can lead healthy, thriving lives and our economy can continue to grow.

Covid-19 has caused massive housing instability throughout Colorado. HB20-1410 and the Covid Relief funding is necessary to alleviate some of the housing crisis we face as a state.

What We Are Facing

Covid-19 has created unprecedented challenges to Colorado and states across the nation. The foremost of these challenges is the potential loss of housing for thousands of Coloradans due to the crisis, and the health threats to those already experiencing housing instability and homelessness.

Before the crisis, Colorado had nearly **580,000** households, of all income levels, that were housing-cost burdened. That's $\frac{1}{3}$ of all households spending **30%**, **50%**, or more on their housing. Of those households, we estimate that **81,912** low-income renters (9.6% of all renters) in Colorado may need housing assistance over the next few months, and another **31,516** low-income homeowner households (2% of all homeowners) may need assistance at least once over the next few months.

The need for intervention is great – both for low income households with lost incomes and housing instability, and for homeless households. We and partners estimate a total need for over \$200 million in funds targeted to emergency rental support, mortgage supports and housing counseling alone. Dedicating \$20 million from the Covid Relief Fund in conjunction with other CARES Act housing funds will make a deep dent in filling need and will allow thousands of Colorado households to remain safely and healthily housed. Thank you for supporting this bill.

Sincerely,

Susan Powers and Dana Crawford, Co-Founders, Mothers Advocate for Affordable Housing



June 4, 2020

Please Support SB20-1410, Covid-19 Related Housing Assistance

Dear Member of the House State, Veterans, and Military Affairs Committee,

Enterprise supports Senate Bill SB20-1410

Enterprise Community Partners, Inc. is a national nonprofit organization whose mission is to create opportunity for low- and moderate-income people through affordable housing in diverse, thriving communities. We bring together nationwide know-how, partners, policy leadership and investment to multiply the impact of affordable homes and put opportunity within every family's reach.

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Sincerely,
Jennie Rodgers, VP, Denver Market Leader



Dear House Committee,

Mental Health Colorado, the state's leading advocate for mental health, urges you to support HB20-1410 COVID-19-related Housing Assistance

A "Yes" vote for HB-1410 will:

- **Mitigate** the housing crisis of an estimated 500,000 Coloradans who will be facing eviction during the pandemic.¹
- **Disentangle** the connections between unstable housing and negative-poor mental health by taking a proactive and preventative approach.
- **Eliminate barriers** for those with mental health conditions who are made especially vulnerable to housing instability and lack of housing.

We know that housing is foundational to overall health and wellbeing. Without housing, there is no strong mental health. We are concerned about the anticipated mental health crisis created over months of uncertainty, that will only be exacerbated by looming evictions and a lack of housing supports.

The connections between housing, poverty, and mental health are complex, cyclical, and vicious, but we can take the necessary steps as a state to ensure all Coloradans have access to housing. People with mental health conditions are disproportionately affected by evictions,² and even the threat of an eviction can have lasting negative psychological impacts.³ This community has the highest rate of poverty of any group of people with disabilities and are less likely to be able to afford a market-rate apartment.⁴

Stable housing is a number one requirement for improving health outcomes. For many individuals with mental health and substance use concerns, maintaining stable housing is a persistent challenge. It's far cheaper—and better for the mental health of the community—to secure an individual's housing rights than it is to manage these challenges through first responders, emergency departments, and the criminal justice system. We need to invest in ensuring housing rights for our communities, so we are not faced with another major crisis on top of already tumultuous times.

Mental Health Colorado fully supports [HB-1410](#), and we are appreciative of the well-considered leadership of the bill sponsors and advocates who are continuing to bring this bill forward.

Sincerely,

Miriam Estrada, MA
Mental Health Colorado

¹ COVID-19 Eviction Defense Fund. (2020, April 20). [\[Link\]](#).

² How evictions from subsidized housing routinely violate the rights of persons with mental illness. (2010). [\[Link\]](#)

³ The Threat of Home Eviction and Its Effects on Health Through the Equity Lens: A Systematic Review. (2017, Jan 9). [\[Link\]](#).



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HOUSING *is* HEALTH!

Prioritize Affordable Housing for Coloradans

What We Are Facing

A Panel of experts recently gathered, convened by **Urban Land Conservancy, Neighborhood Development Collaborative, and Enterprise Community Partners**, to discuss the unprecedented challenges COVID-19 presents to Colorado and states across the nation. The foremost of these challenges are 1) the potential loss of housing for thousands of Coloradans due to the crisis, and 2) the threat to sustained development of housing that was filling an already large gap.

Before the crisis, Colorado had nearly **580,000** households, of all income levels, that were housing-cost burdened. That's $\frac{1}{3}$ of all households spending **30%, 50%**, or more on their housing. Of those households, we estimate that **81,912** low-income renters (9.6% of all renters) in Colorado may need housing assistance over the next few months, and another **31,516** low-income homeowner households (2% of all homeowners) may need assistance at least once over the next few months.

Lessons Learned from the Housing Crisis During Great Recession

- ☑ **Timely, equitable rent and mortgage assistance needs to be provided to proactively prevent a foreclosure crisis.** It is cheaper (and less traumatic for families) to stay in their homes versus being displaced and re-housed. Unlike 2008-09, public/private funders have the resources to make a difference if they act now.
- ☑ **We also need to be proactive when it comes to planning for recovery.** Assistance should not just stop at the end of the crisis—it should continue in a way that helps reduce the ongoing housing deficit so providers aren't left with such a high incremental need for resources every time there is a crisis.

What's Needed to Stave Off a Housing Crisis?

FINANCIAL RESOURCES

- \$47M** In direct homeowner housing cost assistance
- \$98M** In direct renter housing cost assistance
- \$813K** In housing counseling
- \$1M** In operational cost assistance (food provision, social services, health services, PPE, etc.) to affordable housing providers
- \$960K** In cost assistance to nonprofits holding the mortgages of low income households
- \$148M - \$294M IN TOTAL***

*These are conservative estimates based on one month of assistance to be funded by coordinated federal, state, local, and philanthropic sources. The total number of months of assistance needed depend on whether vulnerable households will need 1 or 2 months of assistance--which depends in part on what shape federal assistance takes in the coming months.

POLICY STEPS

-  Transformed shelter systems and permanent housing and solutions to move people out of shelters and into homes.
-  Timely rent and mortgage assistance, and coordinated resource navigation for eligible households.
-  Timely, equitable, and coordinated state, local, and philanthropic response.
-  Prevention of foreclosures wherever possible. When they do occur, prioritize purchase and preservation of those properties for low-moderate income households.

To learn more, contact Jonathan Cappelli, Director of Neighborhood Development Collaborative at jonathan@cappelliconsulting.com or 970-948-4614.



June 10th, 2020

Please Support HB20-1410, Covid-19 Related Housing Assistance

Dear members of the Colorado Senate,

I'm writing to you today on behalf of the Neighborhood Development Collaborative (NDC) a coalition of [16 mission-based affordable housing organizations in Colorado](#), and the additional undersigned housing organizations. Together since 2009, NDC members have created or preserved over **7,400 workforce and affordable homes**, served over **40,000 households** with homebuyer education and housing cost assistance, and created nearly **1,500 jobs**. We strongly support HB20-1410.

Renters: Going into the COVID-19 health crisis there were over 320,000 low-income renters across the state spending 30%, 50%, or more on housing costs. Based on a conservative assumption that at least a quarter of these families or **81,912 households** (*amounting to 9.6% of all CO renters*), will need *at least* one month of rental assistance due to the economic and/or health impacts of the pandemic; at an average rental payment level of just \$1,200, the need for rental assistance is projected to exceed **\$98 million**.

Homeowners: pre-pandemic, there were over 250,000 low-income homeowners across the state spending 30%, 50%, or more on housing costs. While some will have access to federal forbearance or funding from other programs to cover the cost of their housing, we estimate that $\frac{1}{8}$ of low-income homeowners or **31,516 households** (*amounting to 2% of all CO homeowners*), will still need at least one month of housing cost assistance over the course of the next 12 months. Assuming an average mortgage payment of \$1,500, this essential assistance may total over **\$47 million**.

These estimates are conservative because they are based on the percentage of pre-crisis housing cost burdened residents projected to face increased instability due to impacts of COVID-19, and don't cover the additional need that all Coloradans may face because of potential long-term job losses leading to even more people facing unaffordable housing costs. Given this uncertainty, the proposed \$20M emergency rent and mortgage assistance fund, and \$350K eviction legal defense fund are crucial first steps in helping buoying Coloradans through this unprecedented time.

This bill's flexibility to provide direct assistance to vulnerable households or landlords committed to not-evicting residents (especially important for non-profit housing providers), prioritization of homelessness-vulnerable households (with the flexibility to assist households up to 100% AMI), and the fact that it helps both homeowners and renters are all key factors that allow this bill to address a wide breadth of critical issues.

Thank you for hearing our concerns; please support this critical legislation to help stabilize our communities, insulate our economy, and protect the most vulnerable from the unprecedented eviction crisis we now face.

Sincerely,

Jonathan Cappelli
Executive Director, Neighborhood Development Collaborative



NDC Members:

Denver Housing Authority

Ismael Guerrero, Executive Director

Archway Housing & Services, Inc.

Sebastian Corradino, Executive Director

Colorado Coalition for the Homeless

Bill Windsor, Vice President of Housing Development

Colorado Housing Assistance Corp.

Michelle Mitchell, President

Community Resources & Housing Development Corp.

Arturo Alvarado, Executive Director

Del Norte Neighborhood Development Corp.

Marvin Kelly, Executive Director

Denver Urban Renewal Authority

Robin Hickey, Housing Manager

Elevation Community Land Trust

Stefka Fanchi, Executive Director

Colorado Community Land Trust

Jane Harrington, Executive Director

Habitat for Humanity Metro Denver

Heather Lafferty, Executive Director

Mental Health Center of Denver

Michael Niyompong, VP of Strategic Partnerships

NEWSED Community Development Corp.

Andrea Barela, Executive Director

Northeast Denver Housing Center

Gete Mekonnen, Executive Director

Rocky Mountain Communities

Dontae Latson, President and CEO

Urban Land Conservancy

Aaron Miripol, President and CEO

Aurora Housing Authority

Craig Maraschsky, Executive Director

Additional Undersigned Organizations

Habitat for Humanity Colorado

Maiker Housing Partners

Hope Communities

Mercy Homes

Enterprise Community Partners

SUBMITTED WRITTEN TESTIMONY

Committee Senate State, Veterans, & Military Affairs
Meeting Date 06/10/2020 Upon Adjournment

Registered	Bill Number	First Name	Last Name	Position on Bill	Representing	Status	Testifying	Text of Testimony
6/10/2020 9:42	HB20-1410	Liz	Peetz	For	Colorado Association of Realtors	Open	Uploaded file	
6/10/2020 9:51	HB20-1410	Lora	Wright	For	Self	Open	Submitted text	I understand that I am one family in thousands in Colorado that are struggling right now with rent I was fortunate enough to have my rent deferred until July 31st through my apartment complex in Colorado Springs my daughter lost her job in April and she lives with me and her son she has not received unemployment and I have been solely responsible for all of the bills for a family of 3 making \$14 an hour I am \$1,900 behind on my rent right now and that is money I do not have she she is looking for work but having a hard time as many many people are also looking for work I manage a liquor store in from day one I am
6/10/2020 10:22	HB20-1410	Miriam	Estrada	For	Mental Health Colorado	Open	Uploaded file	