



ARIZONA INTERFAITH NETWORK

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AIN Statement on the Eviction Crisis

The Arizona Interfaith Network (AIN) calls on our elected officials to act swiftly to address the state's impending rental eviction tsunami. Tens of thousands of Arizonans stand to lose their homes in the global pandemic, disproportionately affecting lower income and vulnerable families.

We call on the Congressional Delegation, Governor Ducey, and local officials to create the means for tenants and landlords to get through the next six months. This includes extending a state eviction moratorium until June, providing needed new federal relief assistance funds to landlords and tenants, and creating standardized and flexible means to access these resources. We also implore the state to dedicate a substantial portion of its remaining \$313 million in CARES funds towards replenishing Arizona Department of Housing funds for eviction prevention.

In our congregations and in the communities they serve, we are hearing from families being forced to relocate into overcrowded and unsafe conditions, even moving into campgrounds, because they were evicted from their homes. Many parents are foregoing food to pay their rent. Others who have already contracted the virus and lost their jobs, are now worried about being evicted on January 1st! This virus creates a triple threat to low-income, people of color, and immigrant families.

Without extending the CDC's eviction moratorium that expires Dec. 31, the National Council of State Housing Agencies estimates that, in Arizona, between 170,000 to 250,000 renters are at risk for eviction by January 2021. Currently, tenants are estimated to owe \$178 million to landlords, with approximately 40% of those landlords being small business owners. The US Census Bureau's Household Pulse Survey estimates that almost 400,000 Arizona households have little to no confidence they will be able to pay the rent in January.

The human toll is mounting as families are facing desperate choices. The Center for Economic Progress states that, right now in Arizona, 1 in 3 families struggle to pay usual household

expenses; 1 in 5 are behind on rent; and 1 in 8 will find themselves without enough food. From November 1 through 22 alone, 2,246 evictions were filed in Phoenix.

We need our elected leaders to act now to keep families in their homes and prevent landlords from being foreclosed on their rental properties. Only by addressing both aspects of this issue can we effectively prevent a larger public health crisis and continue to fight the spread of COVID-19. This is a non-partisan, moral issue. The health and wellbeing of every Arizonan depend on this.

Respectfully,

The Right Rev. Jennifer Reddall, VI Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Arizona

Resident Bishop Robert Hoshibata, Desert Southwest Conference, The United Methodist Church

The Rev. Deborah K. Hutterer, Bishop, Grand Canyon Synod, ELCA

Rev. Jay Hartley, Regional Minister and President, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Arizona

Rev. Dr. William Lyons, Conference Minister, Southwest Conference of the United Church of Christ

The Rev. Dr. Brad Munroe, Presbytery of Grand Canyon and Presbytery de Cristo

Rev. Rock Fremont Jr., Shepherd of the Hills United Church of Christ, Phoenix

Rev. Robert Fambrini, S.J., St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church, Phoenix

Rev. Bart Smith, St. Mark's Presbyterian Church, Tucson

Rabbi John A. Linder, Temple Solel, Paradise Valley

Rev. Martha Seaman, Arizona Interfaith Network

Rev. Dr. Brooke Isingoma, St. Matthew United Methodist Church, Mesa

Rev. Jeff Procter-Murphy, Dayspring United Methodist Church, Tempe

Amy Notbohm, Dayspring United Methodist Church and Aldersgate United Methodist Church

Rev. Patty Willis, Granite Peak Unitarian Universalist Congregation, Prescott

Rev. Canon Martir Vasquez, St. Andrew's Episcopal, Glendale

The Rev. Dr. Robert R. Howard, Community Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Tempe

Rev. J Scott Deasy, MD FACOG, The Episcopal Church of the Epiphany, Flagstaff

Pastor Charlie McCallie, The Commons, Flagstaff

The Reverend Ann R. Johnson, The Episcopal Church of the Epiphany, Flagstaff

The Rev. Hunter Ruffin, Episcopal Church of the Epiphany, Tempe

Rev. Sarah Isakson, Faith Lutheran Church, Phoenix

Rev. Michael Lonergan, Church of the Painted Hills, UCC, Tucson

The Reverend Michael T. Bush, Casas Adobes Congregational UCC, Tucson

Leah Sandwell-Weiss, Deacon, St Philip's in the Hills Episcopal Church

The Rev. Michael T. Bush, Casas Adobes Congregational United Church of Christ, Tucson

The Rev. Kim Crecca, St. Matthew's Episcopal Church, Tucson

The Rev. Canon David Benedict Hedges, BSG, Saint Michael and All Angels Episcopal Church, Tucson

The Rev. Robert Hendrickson, St Philip's in the Hills Episcopal Church, Tucson

The Rev. Henry Hoffman, St Philip's in the Hills Episcopal Church, Tucson

Rev. Michael Lonergan, Church of the Painted Hills, United Church of Christ, Tucson

The Rev. Leah Sandwell-Weiss, St Philip's in the Hills Episcopal Church

Rev. Bart Smith, St. Mark's Presbyterian Church, Tucson

Rev. Stephen Springer, Dove of Peace Lutheran Church (ELCA), Tucson

The Rev. Linda Hutson, Episcopal Church of the Apostles, Oro Valley

The Rev. Nancy Meister, Grace St Paul's Episcopal Church, Tucson

Rev. Jim Wiltbank, St. Francis in the Foothills United Methodist Church, Tucson

The Rev. Debra Asis, Episcopal Church of the Apostles, Oro Valley

The Rev. Taylor P. Devine, St Philip's in the Hills Episcopal Church, Tucson