

Protecting Canadians from being forced from their homes during a pandemic

March 20, 2020

Sent to: Federal and provincial leaders

Dear representatives,

As a national voice for Canadians in their 20s, 30s and 40s, Generation Squeeze thanks you for the hard work and leadership shown so far during the escalating COVID-19 crisis, and to call on you to immediately strengthen your response.

More needs to be done to ensure housing security, child care for essential workers, and income support are equally available to individuals and families. This letter focuses on housing security.

People cannot be forced from their homes during a pandemic.

While measures announced this week to protect homeowners and some Canadians from the impacts of the pandemic are essential, many people continue to remain vulnerable to housing insecurity. This puts individuals and entire communities at risk.

Gen Squeeze is calling on government leaders to immediately implement emergency policies that achieve two outcomes:

- **All Canadians who are currently adequately housed are able to remain in their homes during this pandemic, regardless of their ability to pay their rent or mortgage;**
- **All Canadians who do not currently have adequate housing are provided safe, adequate shelter during the pandemic ¹.**

It is critically important to keep people housed during this pandemic, both for their own security and well-being, and to help contain the spread of coronavirus.

Gen Squeeze joins others in calling on governments to implement the following, if you have not done so already:

- **An immediate moratorium on evictions to protect all renters from being kicked out of their homes, regardless of their ability to pay rent;**
- **Mandatory mortgage loan forbearance to protect all homeowners from being kicked out of their homes, regardless of their ability to pay their mortgage; and to**

¹ Including those fleeing domestic violence

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protect landlords from *having* to evict tenants due to an inability to pay their mortgage on an occupied unit.²

Income support is also crucial right now, so that Canadians who have lost all or part of their income can pay for food, shelter and other necessities. This type of support must be both (a) universal and (b) high enough to truly prevent any Canadians from falling through the cracks.

We recognize the scope and impacts of COVID-19 are changing daily, putting immense pressure on Canadians and our governments to respond.

However, our governments must ensure that no Canadian lacks for adequate shelter as a result of COVID-19. **Housing security is a key component of ensuring the safety and well-being of individuals, our communities and the entire country during this pandemic.**

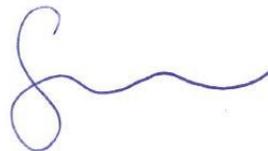
Canada's housing system was already in a state of crisis going into this pandemic, exacerbating the precarity that many Canadians feel today. Gen Squeeze will continue to look to all levels of government to prioritize housing affordability once this pandemic subsides, so that all Canadians can afford a good home as renters or owners.

On behalf of the entire Gen Squeeze network, we thank your governments for their service and hard work during this extraordinary time. Please contact us if we can be of assistance in any way.

Sincerely,



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² Actions by CMHC to purchase insured mortgage pools, and voluntary action by Canada's six largest banks, Vancity Credit Union and potentially other mortgage providers to allow for the deferral of mortgage payments are good steps. However, given the large range of mortgage providers in Canada, we must ensure that loan deferrals/forbearance is available to all during the pandemic.