

A PROPOSED RESOLUTION

IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

To declare the existence of an emergency with respect to the need to authorize the Department of Human Services and the Mayor to expand eligibility for the Emergency Rental Assistance Program.

RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this resolution may be cited as the “Rental Assistance Expansion Emergency Declaration Resolution of 2020.”

Sec. 2. (a) On March 11, 2020, the Mayor of the District of Columbia issued Mayor’s Order 2020-45, 2020-46, declaring a public emergency and a public health emergency in the District due to the imminent threat to the health, safety, and welfare of District residents posed by the spread of COVID-19, and on April 17, 2020, Mayor’s Order 2020-63 extending the state of emergency and public health emergency. That order is currently in effect through October 9, 2020. Additional orders extending the emergency are likely to be issued.

(b) The widespread closure of businesses has led to many District residents losing jobs, being furloughed, or working reduced hours, compounding financial hardship many residents were already experiencing.

32 (c) Data from the Census Bureau’s Household Pulse Survey suggests that nearly 18% of  
33 renters in the District have not been able to make their rent payments on time during the  
34 pandemic due to loss of employment or income. These residents will be particularly vulnerable  
35 to eviction once the public health emergency ends.

36 (e) Currently, individuals, families or households who make more than 125% of the  
37 federal poverty guidelines are ineligible for assistance under the Emergency Rental Assistance  
38 Program (ERAP), leading to the exclusion of many residents who need rental assistance.

39 (f) To address the restrictive requirements of ERAP, it is necessary to authorize the  
40 Department of Human Services to expand eligibility to individuals, households, and families  
41 who make up to 60% of the area-median income, and to undocumented residents. This would  
42 result in an estimated 20,000 additional individuals, families, and households being potentially  
43 eligible for the program.

44 (g) The Mayor may direct up to \$8 million received pursuant to the CARES Act  
45 approved March 27, 2020 (Pub. L. No. 116-136; 134 Stat. 281), be used to fund the expanded  
46 emergency rental assistance program.

47 Sec. 3. The Council of the District of Columbia determines that the circumstances in  
48 section 2 constitute emergency circumstances, making it necessary that the Coronavirus Support  
49 Emergency Amendment Act of 2020 be adopted after a single reading.

50 Sec. 4. This resolution shall take effect immediately.