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United States Senate
COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON, DC 20510–6075

March 17, 2020

Jonathan Thompson
Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer
National Sheriffs' Association
1450 Duke Street
Alexandria, VA 22314

Dear Mr. Thompson:

We write to raise with you an emerging risk as our nation grapples with the devastating effects of the COVID-19 (coronavirus) outbreak. The economic impact of this outbreak could cause financial stress on workers and families, which could ultimately place them at risk of being evicted from their homes. As health professionals, elected officials, law enforcement officials, and others work to respond to this public health emergency, we urge the National Sheriffs' Association to support, and it's members to establish, local moratoriums on evictions in light of the coronavirus epidemic.

As Americans are facing threats to their families' health and, in many cases, job and financial security, suspending evictions for the duration of the COVID-19 crisis would reassure families that they are able to stay in their homes and maintain much needed stability in our communities.

We have long recognized the critical work you and your members do across the country, and amid this major public health emergency, your efforts should be devoted to doing what you all do best—addressing urgent, life-threating situations. By instituting a moratorium on evictions, Sheriffs in towns and cities across the nation will be able to prioritize the most crucial needs in their communities. In fact, many communities have implemented suspensions on evictions pursuant to a court order with the support of local Sheriffs and elected officials. Miami-Dade County, Florida; Montgomery County, Maryland; and the City of Los Angeles, California are just a few examples of jurisdictions across the nation that have taken this step to address some of the fears of eviction that families are facing due to the economic impact of the coronavirus. Broadly adopting that kind of concrete step would put families first and allow law enforcement nationwide to focus on urgent emergencies and support local officials as we collectively work to slow down the spread of the virus.

During the coming weeks and months, the work of the National Sheriffs' Association will be a critical part of the response to this national public health emergency.

We appreciate the opportunity to work with you and your members to ensure the safety of your members and the American people.

Sincerely,

Sherrod Brown
United States Senator

Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator