



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES  
CANADA

**JAGMEET SINGH**

DÉPUTÉ | MP, BURNABY SOUTH | BURNABY-SUD

March 29, 2020

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau  
Prime Minister of Canada  
House of Commons,  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

**Urgent help: rent freeze for April 1st**

Dear Prime Minister,

The first of the month is days away and people are understandably very worried about how they're going to pay their rent, their mortgages, their bills, get the medications they need, and feed their families. Renters need urgent help now. Many have lost their jobs and many more must choose between paying the bills and doing the right thing with physical distancing to avoid potentially spreading or catching the COVID-19 virus.

This situation is the same all across Canada. People face uncertainty and are looking to the federal government to provide help and guidance during this very difficult time. Canadians are very worried and they have been seeking the federal government's help during this period of uncertainty.

The passing of the bill in the House of Commons and the Senate earlier this week and the announcement of the Canadian Emergency Response Benefits were good first steps, but the new emergency benefit will not reach everyone who most needs help. For those who will get it, it will not arrive until later in April. For many, their ongoing concern of how they would meet their significant financial burden has a direct impact on their physical and mental health. The federal government needs to do much more to help people facing this crisis, particularly Indigenous Peoples. Food, shelter, and essentials need to be provided. Help is needed now too.

.../2

**JAGMEET SINGH**

DÉPUTÉ | MP, BURNABY SOUTH | BURNABY-SUD

-2-

To protect Canadians from losing their homes, with 53% of Canadians already living paycheque to paycheque, the federal government must step in now, before rent day, and work with all levels of government to put a nation-wide moratorium on evictions and rent, mortgage and utility payments. As we have called for before, this initiative must be paired with action to mandate the banks to waive interest fees and charges on credit cards, bank loans, lines of credit and mortgages for at least the next two payments cycles.

On behalf of the NDP Caucus, NDP Housing Critic Jenny Kwan, MP (Vancouver East) wrote on March 21 to Deputy Prime Minister Freeland and Minister Hussen on the need for a nationwide rent freeze and guaranteed income to protect Canadians before rent day. As it was pointed out, the last thing we need during this pandemic is to add to Canada's homelessness crisis.

It should be noted that even in provinces where there is an eviction moratorium in place, renters and homeowners alike are concerned about being hit with a lump sum bill with all deferred payments, accrued interests and late charges once the moratorium is lifted.

Renters landlords, and homeowners urgently need our help. The federal government must act immediately, before April, to suspend rent, utility bills and mortgage payments and impose a moratorium on evictions across the country.

The federal government possesses numerous policy tools to enact this urgent policy. Let's put in place effective solutions to ensure that no one is left behind in these extraordinary times.

.../3



**JAGMEET SINGH**

DÉPUTÉ | MP, BURNABY SOUTH | BURNABY-SUD

-3-

As always, you can count on the NDP's full cooperation to do what needs to be done to implement help for people right now.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jagmeet Singh". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Jagmeet Singh, MP  
Burnaby South  
Leader, Canada's New Democrats

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jenny Kwan". The signature is cursive and somewhat stylized.

Jenny Kwan, MP  
Vancouver East  
Critic for Housing

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Peter Julian". The signature is cursive and clear.

Peter Julian, MP  
New Westminster—Burnaby  
Critic for Finance