

Offered by Councilor Michelle Wu



CITY OF BOSTON IN CITY COUNCIL

ORDER FOR A HEARING TO DISCUSS RENT RELIEF FOR COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL TENANTS IN CITY- AND BPDA-OWNED PROPERTIES

WHEREAS: The City of Boston declared a public health emergency due to the COVID-19 pandemic and continues to enforce necessary public health measures directed by the City and Commonwealth of Massachusetts to slow the spread of the virus, including the closure of non-essential businesses, schools, and child care; *and*

WHEREAS: Renters, homeowners, workers, and small businesses complying with these government directives to protect public health are facing devastating economic impacts; *and*

WHEREAS: In the two weeks following the City of Boston's public health emergency declaration, more than 329,000 people filed unemployment claims in Massachusetts (almost 9 percent of the state's workforce), and many more do not qualify for unemployment assistance or have yet to file; *and*

WHEREAS: Absent state legislation, the City does not have the authority to implement rent relief across all properties in Boston; however the City of Boston and Boston Planning & Development Agency could offer rent relief to tenants of properties owned by these two public entities; *and*

WHEREAS: Publicly-owned properties with small business tenants who could benefit from immediate rent relief include the Bruce C. Bolling Municipal Building and the China Trade Building; *NOW THEREFORE BE IT*

RESOLVED: That the appropriate committee of the Boston City Council hold a hearing to discuss rent relief for tenants in municipal buildings and BPDA-owned buildings, and that representatives from the Boston Planning and Development Agency, the City of Boston Budget Office, and the public be invited to testify.

Filed on: April 8, 2020