

**Brandywine Communities**

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BrandywineCommunities.com



April 17, 2020

The Honorable Jay Costa  
1501 Ardmore Blvd #403  
Pittsburgh, PA 15221

Dear Senator Costa,

I am the President of [Brandywine Communities](https://www.bandywinecommunities.com), one of the primary affordable housing and commercial property management companies in the region. For the last 60+ years, we have been committed to providing moderate and low-income individuals and seniors with high value, stable, affordable housing. We have always worked closely with tenants who struggle to make ends meet, but in all my years in this business, I have never seen such economic despair as the COVID crisis has wrought.

Each day, I hear from more and more residents experiencing extreme hardship. Our clients are especially vulnerable to disruptions in their ability to work, and thus, their ability to pay rent. From the very beginning of this crisis, we have taken coronavirus seriously and have been leaders among our peers in our efforts to keep our residents safe.

I desperately want to continue to be able to responsibly provide our residents with a safe, stable place to call home. My residents have lost steady wages, access to health care, and in some cases, family and friends to this invisible enemy. The last thing they need is to be displaced because they cannot afford rent.

Pennsylvania state government has taken some good initial steps but has not gone nearly far enough to help the population of tenants in properties like ours. They need more help, and they need it now.

I am writing to ask Pennsylvania to consider the following relief measures:

- Create a state emergency rental assistance program for those who are impacted by the COVID-19 crisis and struggle to cover housing expenses.
  - Allow more housing providers access to mortgage forbearance and ensure term fairness and flexibility.
  - Require any savings from mortgage forbearance to be passed on to renters in the form of reduced rent or reimbursement of paid rent.
  - Provide financial assistance for property-level financial obligations such as property taxes or insurance payments.
  - Require any savings from financial assistance to be passed to renters in the form of reduced rent or reimbursement of paid rent.
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- Temporarily waive property taxes; the largest single expense of operating many properties.
- Require any savings to be passed to renters in the form of reduced rent or reimbursement of paid rent.
- Vastly expand and improve access to and efficiency of PA's unemployment compensation program.

Thank you in advance for your consideration. We can make it out of this pandemic, but only if we all work together. We need an all-hands-on-deck approach from state government, and we need it now.

I hope to hear from you soon to discuss how we can work together to help those who most need us to get through this crisis.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Katz". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

John Katz, President  
Brandywine Agency, Inc  
dba, Brandywine Communities