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September 18, 2024

Hon. (Name of Council Member),
City of Rochester Council
30 Church Street
Rochester, NY 14614

Dear Council Member Patterson:

This letter comes to you from the Advocacy Team, with the full support of the REACH Advocacy Board, and concerns the current Good Cause Eviction bill being considered by Council. We are asking you to vote to strengthen this bill so that **all** tenants living in our city can feel secure in their homes. The current version of the bill excludes about 35,000 from this sense of security.

In support of this request, we ask you to consider the social impact of housing insecurity, not only on adult tenants, but each child of those tenants who live in our city. We are convinced that housing insecurity is a fundamental factor in poor school performance by many of our children, creating an even heavier cost to social services in our community.

REACH believes that all people needed to be treated with dignity and respect. For us this means that just as homeowners are legally protected from unscrupulous financial institutions, so tenants need to be protected from unscrupulous landlords. We believe that housing is a human right, and all people need to be protected by law from any form of injustice.

Recently we learned about Mary, a single mother and a tenant. She has been in her apartment in an older building and has paid her rent, currently $900, on time during the past eight years. Recently the sash cords in two of the windows broke. Her landlord charged her $1,500 for repairs and took this out of her regular payments so that she is now in arrears and facing eviction. If Good Cause Eviction were in place, Mary would not be in this plight, and the landlord would be responsible for this kind of necessary maintenance.

In our experience Mary and her children are not alone in dealing with this kind of housing insecurity. We hope that you will support the passage the stronger version of the Good Cause Eviction bill now before you to protect the children and their hard-working parents from living daily with housing insecurity.

Respectfully,

Peter W. Peters

The Rev. Peter W. Peters, Ph.D.
Chair, REACH Advocacy Team

REACH Advocacy, Inc. P.O. Box 10845, Rochester, NY 14610
info@reachadvocacy.org