

October 17, 2024

The Honorable Roy Cooper
Governor
State of North Carolina
1 E Edenton St.
Raleigh, NC 27601

Judge Paul Martin Newby
Chief Justice
State of North Carolina
2 E Morgan St.
Raleigh, NC 27601

Dear Governor Cooper and Chief Justice Newby:

On behalf of the undersigned national members of the NLIHC-led Disaster Housing Recovery Coalition (DHRC), **we urge you to utilize your executive authority to prevent evictions and foreclosures in areas of North Carolina impacted by Hurricane Helene for 90 days.** This action is within the scope of your executive powers and would prevent the needless displacement of thousands of impacted households – including many of the hardest hit disaster survivors who will need the greatest amount of assistance to recover from this catastrophic storm.

The DHRC includes more than 900 local, state, and national organizations, including many organizations working directly with disaster-impacted communities and with first-hand experience recovering after disasters. Together, we work to ensure that federal disaster recovery efforts reach all impacted households, including those with the lowest incomes.

The use of eviction and foreclosure moratoriums has precedent in related executive actions undertaken after recent disasters. After COVID-19, you rightfully utilized an [eviction moratorium](#) to ensure that North Carolinians with the lowest incomes did not face displacement and, in worst cases, homelessness, because of pandemic-related economic turmoil. In addition, Hawaii Governor Josh Green, M.D., issued an [emergency proclamation](#) banning most evictions for an extended period following the devastating 2023 Maui Wildfires.

NLIHC and the DHRC have been notified by partners working in the area impacted by Hurricane Helene that post-disaster evictions and foreclosures are a looming threat to disaster survivors. [Studies](#) and the [experiences](#) of disaster survivors from around the country show that economic disruption can prevent many disaster survivors, both renters and homeowners, from collecting the funds necessary to remain in their homes. At the same time, housing costs increase due to the lack of available housing in the impacted area and the simultaneous [increase](#) in

housing need as individuals whose homes were damaged or destroyed seek alternative shelter. The fastest and most efficient way to address these issues is the use of eviction and foreclosure moratoriums – ensuring that low-income renters and homeowners can remain stably housed through the turbulent months of short-term recovery.

Not only do evictions and foreclosures further the harm and suffering created by this disaster, they will slow and worsen the recovery of the impacted areas. Without this requested action, households already being harmed by the affordable housing crisis in the region, including essential workers, will be forced to relocate away from the area. These households will be unlikely to return any time soon given the financial hit they have taken due to the Hurricane and the lack of affordable housing in the area. Any effort to assist Western North Carolina in economically recovering from Hurricane Helene is pointless if there is no workforce able to contribute and benefit from it.

Disasters disproportionately impact the lowest-income survivors. At the same time, these survivors are least likely to receive the assistance that they need to fully recover. One of the top priorities after a disaster must be ensuring all displaced survivors have a safe, accessible, and affordable place to live while they recover. We request that you assist in this endeavor by lawfully invoking your executive power to issue an eviction and foreclosure moratorium for areas of North Carolina impacted by Hurricane Helene.

Given the amount of harm created by these evictions and the pressing nature of this concern, we request a prompt response to this letter. For more information or to continue this discussion, we urge you to contact NLIHC Disaster Housing Recovery Manager Noah Patton at npatton@nlihc.org.

Sincerely,

Affordable Homeownership Foundation Inc.

Anthropocene Alliance

Coalition on Human Needs

Disaster Justice Network

Fair Share Housing Center

Feeding the Carolinas

Habitat for Humanity International

Livelihoods Knowledge Exchange Network (LiKEN)

MDC Inc.

National Coalition for the Homeless

National Consumer Law Center

National Housing Law Project

National Low Income Housing Coalition

Natural Resources Defense Council

NECHAMA -- Jewish Response to Disaster

The Neutral Ground Collective

Public Advocacy for Kids (PAK)

The Redress Movement

The Partnership for Inclusive Disaster Strategies

Turtle Island Restoration Network

Union of Concerned Scientists

United Church of Christ

World Institute on Disability

CC:

The Honorable Josh Stein, Attorney General, State of North Carolina

The Honorable Phil Berger, Senate President pro tempore, State of North Carolina

The Honorable Dan Blue, Senate Democratic Leader, State of North Carolina

The Honorable Tim Moore, Speaker of the House of Representatives, State of North Carolina

The Honorable Robert. T. Reives, II, Democratic Leader, House of Representatives, State of North Carolina