

THE SENATE OF TEXAS

STATE CAPITOL, 3S.5
AUSTIN, TEXAS 78711
(512) 463-0127

1210 W. INTERSTATE 2, STE. 10
PHARR, TEXAS 78577
(956) 787-5227



800 N. INTERSTATE 69, STE. 7
BROWNSVILLE, TEXAS 78521
(956) 548-0227

700 FM 3168
RAYMONDVILLE, TEXAS 78580
(956) 689-1860, EXT. 230

SENATOR
EDDIE LUCIO, JR.

March 23, 2020

The Honorable Greg Abbott
State Capitol, 2S.1
Austin, TX 78711

Dear Governor Abbott:

Thank you for your continued leadership in this time of crisis brought on by the onset of COVID-19 in Texas. As you have repeatedly stated, this crisis can only be brought to its end by the cooperation of all Texans through engaging in social distancing. Many higher education leaders at universities across the state have heeded this advice by cancelling in-person classes, moving to online education, and encouraging students to return home for the remainder of the semester.

Unfortunately, for many students, following this final recommendation, which is reflective of best practices in a social distancing scenario, will entail great expense on their part because they have signed on to leases for an off-campus apartment through the remainder of the semester. This expense is compounded for many students who have lost on- or off-campus employment as a result of the coronavirus outbreak.

It is in everyone's best interest for these students to remain or return home, but the financial burden placed on them by continuing to make unnecessary rent payments forestalls that opportunity. Conversely, nobody benefits from rental properties sitting empty while the leases of these vulnerable students run out.

That is why I write you today to respectfully ask that you take any and all actions within your power to protect students who wish to leave off-campus housing under the recommendation of their university officials from undue financial burdens, including releasing them from lease agreements they will be unable to fulfill. As rent will be due on April 1 in many cases, I urge you to act quickly to protect these students' interests to ensure they are not taken advantage of by these unprecedented circumstances. Again, I commend you for your decisive response to this crisis, and look forward to continuing to work with you to help Texas weather this storm.

Sincerely,

Eddie Lucio, Jr.
State Senator

