

**Name:** Matt Adam-Houser

**Representing:** Matt Adam-Houser and Tanya Nascimento

**Supporting:** HB-5574 HA 1 Emergency Rental and Homeowner Protection Act

**Testimony:**

I'm deeply appreciative of the opportunities and community this city has afforded me. I recently lost my job due to Covid-19. Despite this, my rental company, Becovic, has increased our rent for a renewed lease and is refusing to negotiate a deferred payment plan. It's absolutely absurd that this is allowed to take place in the middle of a pandemic. I was barely able to afford rent for a single bedroom, with a full time job at \$18/hour. Now they are expecting me and my fiance to stomach an increase when both of us are unemployed.

If this city is incapable of supporting its citizens in a time of crisis, and allows for the continued abuse of its residents by the real estate lobby, then there's no reason to pretend we're a community at all. The theft of livelihood by way of excessive rent for citizens isn't new, but the painful wound incurred by these predatory agencies, who pretend that it's permissible or even expected to demand more during times when all should be afforded common compassion, highlights its gangrenous nature. Better to be lopped off. If you don't, we might.