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HIGH RESOLUTION PHOTOS & INTERVIEWS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

Nation Braces For Largest Renter-Led Protest In Our Time As Thousands Prepare To Take The Streets Across The Country Thursday for the National #RentersDayOfActon.

Follow #RenterPower and #RentersDayOfAction for live updates, photos, videos on social media.

NEW YORK -- In 2014, then HUD-Secretary Shaun Donovan observed to the nation that, “we’re in the midst of the worst affordability crisis this country has ever known.” According to the American Community Survey a record 21.3 million - or 1 in 2 - renter households are cost-burdened, paying more than 30% of income on rent, and 11.4 million - or 1 in 4 - renter households now pay more than 50% of income on rent. Earlier this year the National Low-Income Housing Coalition’s Out Of Reach report showed that on average a renter making minimum wage in the U.S. would have to work 90-hours per week to afford a modest 2-bedroom home.

“The evidence is clear that renters and low-income families are facing an unprecedented national housing crisis, and it’s getting worse” says Dawn Phillips, Executive Director of the Right To The City Alliance. “That’s why renters, working-class people and families everywhere are rising up for the Renters Day Of Action to demand an end to rising rents, evictions and for development without displacement in our cities and towns.”

On Thursday September 22 2016, renters across the country will do just that. Thousands have pledged to take to the streets in Chicago, Los Angeles, Denver, Oakland, Brooklyn, Boston, Atlanta, Nashville, Seattle, Portland, Memphis, San Francisco and more than 34 other cities across the country as part of the national #RentersDayOfAction organized by the National Homes For All Campaign. (For a full list of actions see: www.homesforall.org/rentersday )

“Right now, in Oregon, it is legal for one to lose their rental home without reason and little to no recourse, explains Katrina Holland of the Community Alliance of Tenants, “It is also legal for tenants' rents to be raised by any amount. Families are facing 30%, 40%, 100% and even in one case, 350% increases in their rents with as little as 30 days notice. Enough is enough. We’re taking the fight to Oregon’s capitol steps to tell our legislators to enact Just Cause Eviction Protections and repeal the ban on rent stabilization.”

Already on Tuesday, hundreds took the streets in Pittsburgh and temporarily sat-down to block Pennsylvania Avenue. Renters in Newark have been holding a 36-hour sit-in at city hall to defend that city's rent control policy and demand that the city invest in development policies that do not displace Newark residents. And in Lynn, MA renters converged on City Hall Conservation Commission hearing to protest the proposed development of 348 high end apartments that will include 0 affordable housing units.

On Wednesday, Seattle residents plan to “occupy space” at City Hall to demand “demand that the Mayor and City Council take immediate and direct action to stop displacement and make Seattle affordable again for the working-class, middle-class, LGBTQ, disabled, and people of color,” according to an announcement.”
Homes For All has released the following #RentersDayOfAction demands:

- A freeze on all unjust evictions and rent increases
- The establishment of a national livable rent standard to restrict rents to 30% of a family income and a livable wage for all workers.
- The right of all tenants to organize and bargain collectively with landlords without fear of discrimination, retaliation or eviction.
- The transfer of vacant, foreclosed and underused land to community control through community land trusts and cooperatives to meet the needs of communities of color and working class communities that have historically been targeted -- from disinvestment to redlining --- to the foreclosure crisis and the current eviction epidemic

Quotes from Renters around the country (photos available)

“On March 2016, I was displaced out of my home. I have been homeless since I moved out. I just lost my job due to stress from lack of a permanent shelter. I know I am not the only faced with this predicament. It is a renter state of emergency. We must stop unjust evictions, corporate greed and land speculation in Boston!” - Xiu Zhu Huang, Boston MA

“I was living in a unit with mold, mildew, leaks. The ceiling in living room had collapsed. I called the landlords to demand repairs and began withholding rent. I didn't feel like I should pay my rent if I didn't have quality housing. They took me to court and I was given 7 days to be evicted. Me and my kids are now homeless, but with only 8.30 per hour I make at The Varsity, I can’t find anything affordable.” - Felicia Johnson, Atlanta GA

“We are fighting back to keep our home and stay together with our neighbors because we have developed a strong community, like a family.” Mel Laguardia, Alameda CA

“It doesn’t matter if you’re in the country or you’re in the city, it’s like someone coming into you home and saying this is my street now. ‘You have to go, you’re no longer wanted here.’ I’ve been here since the street was made and you’re gonna tell me that I cannot be here anymore. That's how that feels. It feels like our whole city is getting evicted.” Shamita Granberry Nashville, TN

“Landlords are coming in and just hike up the rent and poor people cannot afford it. Wages are still low and rents are so high. That is one of the big problems.” Sharon Mena, Lynn MA

Additional interviews and quotes available upon request.

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