Template Letter for Students to Send to MPs Regarding Housing and Coronavirus

Dear [MP’s Name],

I am writing to you as a student renter in your constituency living in (provide details of your accommodation provider) as I am being impacted severely by the Coronavirus crisis and need your support. Provide the details of your situation here:

You may wish to outline:

* Whether you are stuck in a tenancy contract for this current or next academic year despite not currently living there
* Any financial difficulties you are having paying the rent
* Any issues you have had with your landlord during the Coronavirus pandemic
* Any recent communications you have had with your landlord
* The support you have/have not received from your university/college

You can ask your MP to:

* Raise your case in parliament after recess
* Write to your university, accommodation provider or landlord regarding your circumstances
* Reference your case if they also choose to support the NUS in their national campaign to #SaveStudentRenters (see below)

The NUS is asking government to step-in to ensure that all universities, private sector purpose-built student accommodation providers and landlords in the private rented sector do the following:

* Landlords must stay updated with and implement best practice public health guidance, communicate clearly with tenants and provide maximum support
* Every student landlord must offer a no-penalty early release from tenancy contracts for the current and next academic year.
* End all evictions, for all renters, for the duration of the crisis.
* All renters who are financially impacted by the Coronavirus must have their rents subsidised, significantly reduced or waived entirely for 6 months
* Suspend all rent increases for the next 12 months

You should have received a briefing from the NUS regarding the detail of their 5 demands for student renters. If not, please contact Taidgh Pledger, Public Affairs Officer at NUS (Taidgh.pledger@nus.org.uk).

As a constituent of yours I urge you to support the NUS in their campaign to #SaveStudentRenters and ensure that student renters receive the support they need during this epidemic. You can do this by:

* Writing to any universities, private sector student accommodation providers and private rented sector landlords in your constituency asking them to voluntarily introduce the measures outlined by the NUS. You can use their [open letters](https://www.nus.org.uk/en/news/press-releases/nus-demands-for-student-renters--open-letters-to-providers-of-student-rented-accommodation/?load=5&top=196) as a guide.
* Asking questions of the government once parliament resumes from recess (Appendix A)
* Sharing your support for the NUS’ asks with the #SaveStudentRenters on social media utilizing their suggested tweets (Appendix B)
* Sharing your support for [their open letters](https://www.nus.org.uk/en/news/press-releases/nus-demands-for-student-renters--open-letters-to-providers-of-student-rented-accommodation/?load=5&top=196) on your social media platforms with the #SaveStudentRenters

Yours Sincerely,

Your Name

Appendix A

Questions to ask of government –

* To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps his Department is taking to support students who are living in privately rented accommodation through the COVID-19 epidemic.
* To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what discussions he has had with a) Vice Chancellors b) private purpose-built student accommodation providers c) landlords associations on offering all students no-penalty early release from tenancy contracts or rent obligations for the current and next academic year.
* To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps his Department is taking to support student renters who are unable to afford rental costs as a result of the COVID-19 epidemic.
* To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many international students have remained in the UK as a result of travel restrictions caused by COVID-19.
* To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps his Department is taking to ensure all a) care leavers b) estranged students and c) international students have safe accommodation.
* To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what steps his Department is taking to ensure all landlords implement best practice public health guidance.
* To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that landlords cannot evict tenants, including those renting via license agreements in student accommodation, during the COVID-19 epidemic.
* To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what assessment he has made of the benefits of suspending all increases in rental payments for the next 12 months.
* To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that landlords communicate clearly with tenants regarding public health advice.

Appendix B: Suggested Tweets

* I support @NUSUK in asking all student landlords to stay updated with and implement official Coronavirus guidance. Student tenants’ health is paramount and you must provide maximum support to those tenants through lockdown and to any who must self-isolate #SaveStudentRenters
* I support @NUSUK in asking student landlords to waive rent obligations for those that fall into rent arrears as a result of Coronavirus. Students are saddled with enough debt as it is, they must not be forced into taking on more #SaveStudentRenters
* I support @NUSUK in asking government to introduce emergency Coronavirus financial support to prevent students falling behind on their rent. Students are struggling and have enough debt as it is without rent arrears stacking up! #SaveStudentRenters
* I support @NUSUK in asking all student landlords to release students from their tenancies if they are no longer attending university and have left the property. Landlords! Don’t force students to pay for a room they aren’t even in #ReleaseTheStudents #SaveStudentRenters
* I support @NUSUK in asking government to ensure all students can be released from tenancies for the next academic year if it does not go ahead as a result of Covid-19. Students must not be paying rent for accommodation that they cannot or should not occupy #SaveStudentRenters