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Honorable Members of the Neighborhood, Planning, and Development Committee

KCMO City Council

414 E 12th St, Kansas City, MO 64106

Thank you for taking up discussion on Ordinance 211067 concerning the important issue of tenants' access to legal counsel. I am especially appreciative to Councilwoman Bough for sponsoring this ordinance. I write to you as a resident of the Third District, wherein I have the discomfoting experience of watching so many of my neighbors experience the humiliation of eviction. The sight of children's bedding, clothing, and toys stacked high on the curb is a hard one to shake from my mind.

My knowledge of the hard road that lies ahead of these folks makes it even harder to watch. It pains me to know that the loss of their home places the youth (and their caregivers) at higher risk of mental illness, poor academic achievement, disciplinary problems, and incarceration. As a school board member for KCPS, it is so frustrating to know that for too many of our students, academic success is desperately desired and sought after, but is not supported by their living conditions. With such a high rate of evictions that take place in Kansas City, MO, it is unsurprising that we see such high rates of violence and low rates of high school graduation. When so much is at stake for families that are in danger of losing their homes, they should at least have the benefit of legal representation during these proceedings.

I implore you to support tenants in their access to legal representation during eviction proceedings. Our future is at stake.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Jones', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.