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Tenant Union Federation Officially Launches

More than 500 Tenant Leaders, Five Tenant Unions, Join Into New National Union

Today hundreds of tenants, rank and file union members, local elected officials, and national advocates came together to launch the [Tenant Union Federation](#), a new national formation, organizing tenants to wield power at a massive scale, to bargain for tenant protections, to disrupt the flow of capital to those who commodify our homes, to secure alternatives to the current housing market, to guarantee housing as a public good, and to establish tenants as a political class that cannot be ignored.

The Federation is founded by five locals: Bozeman Tenants United (Bozeman, Montana), Connecticut Tenants Union (Connecticut), Louisville Tenants Union (Louisville, Kentucky), KC Tenants (Kansas City, Missouri), and Not Me We (Southside Chicago, Illinois).

The Tenant Union Federation, a union of unions, is the first national tenant organization that invests directly in local unions with training, funding, and on-the-ground organizing. Together, the unions lead a national [campaign to win rent caps](#).

At the launch event, leaders from the founding locals spoke about the importance of tenants organizing to wield a new kind of power and fight for their homes.

"Today's housing market is a catastrophic failure, shaped by the relentless prioritization of those who profit from our basic need for a home. This moment calls on us to take big and small actions, and to build durable infrastructure to sustain this struggle through time," **said Tara Raghuveer, director and founder of the Tenant Union Federation.** "The rent is too damn high, and it keeps getting higher. It is not a given that the people will prevail against today's odds, but if we have a chance, the chance lives in the tenant union."

"More and more of us live under the heel of corporate landlords based hundreds of miles and many states away. Winning safe and dignified housing for ALL in Bozeman will require a powerful, national movement of tenants to fight, and to win," said **Ozaa EchoMaker, a leader with Bozeman Tenants United.**

"Big players in the housing market are coordinating at a national level—they're coordinating to fix rent prices, buy politicians, prevent pro-tenant legislation, and control more and more of our housing and land. If we're going to challenge them head on, we need to organize and build beyond Connecticut—our success is bound up with the success of the tenant union movement nationally," said **Hannah Srajer, Connecticut Tenants Union president.**

"KC Tenants is joining the Federation because power respects power. We've all started locally building tenant power, and now it's time to unite and organize tenant unions nationally so we can amass the power we need to win for the people and by the people. Our rent checks fuel the American economy, and our landlords do business across state lines. It is time for a national movement," said **Lamont Foster, a leader with KC Tenants.**

"Through the Tenant Union Federation's training program, tenant unions all over the country will be training together using the same language and methodology, and we hope that scares the living hell out of our landlords," said **Josh Poe, a Louisville Tenants Union organizer.** "We joined the Tenant Union Federation because we understand the urgency of the moment and recognize that we are living under the specter of rising fascism, that we organize in places where the KKK drop off materials, and that our only hope is to organize across the lines that the other side uses to divide us."

"It won't take neat policy or advocacy to fix this issue. We're not gonna win by asking nicely. It will take power. And lots of it. We know that power only comes from organized people and tenant power is only

going to come from organized tenants. TUF union's are serious about the practice of tenant organizing, and we refuse to lose." said **Infiniti Gant, an organizer with Not Me We in Chicago.**

BACKGROUND

Rent is the most significant determinant of families' economic security, and the stability of communities. Whether someone can keep their job, sustain their connections to neighbors, send their kids to school consistently— all of this becomes a question of whether they can pay the rent.

Of the roughly 48 million households, or [114 million tenants](#), more than half are [rent-burdened](#), spending 30% or more of their income on rent. Rents are now [nearly 30% higher than they were before the pandemic](#). Millions of tenants are forced to make the choice between paying the rent and feeding their kids.

Since 2021, tenants organized through the Tenant Union Federation have called on the Biden administration to condition Enterprise-backed mortgages on rent regulations. Through the Federation's organizing, in 2023, thousands of tenants submitted comments to the FHFA in support of rent regulations. Allies including [Senators Brown, Schumer, and 15 other senators](#) as well as [House Financial Services Committee Ranking Member Waters also submitted letters](#) to the FHFA calling for rent regulations. Additionally, [more than 30 economists](#), over [140 academics](#), more than [70 climate researchers](#), and over [70 local elected leaders](#) all submitted letters backing federal tenant protections including rent regulations. In November, [100 tenant leaders held a tenant takeover](#) with a Congressional briefing press conference in Washington, DC advocating for rent regulations.

More recently, tenant unions with the Federation have met with FHFA leadership to drive home the importance of federal action to stop rent-gouging. Tenant pressure on the White House also led to President Biden and [Democratic Nominee Kamala Harris to publicly call for rent caps](#) and offer their support for federal policy that holds corporate landlords accountable.

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