STATE OF CONNECTICUT

BY HIS EXCELLENCY

NED LAMONT

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 7GGG

PROTECTION OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND RESPONSE – TEMPORARY RENTAL AND MORTGAGE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS; EXTENSION OF TIME TO COMPLETE CONTINUING EDUCATION FOR CERTAIN TRADES

WHEREAS, on March 10, 2020, I issued a declaration of public health and civil preparedness emergencies, proclaiming a state of emergency throughout the State of Connecticut as a result of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) outbreak in the United States and Connecticut; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to such declaration, I have issued fifty-nine (59) executive orders to suspend or modify statutes and to take other actions necessary to protect public health and safety and to mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, COVID-19 is a respiratory disease that spreads easily from person to person and may result in serious illness or death; and

WHEREAS, the World Health Organization has declared the COVID-19 outbreak a pandemic; and

WHEREAS, to reduce the spread of COVID-19, the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH) recommend implementation of community mitigation strategies to slow transmission of COVID-19, including cancellation of gatherings of ten people or more and social distancing in smaller gatherings; and

WHEREAS, the risk of severe illness and death from COVID-19 is higher for individuals who are 60 or older and for those who have chronic health conditions; and

WHEREAS, public health experts have determined that it is possible to transmit COVID-19 even before a person shows symptoms and through aerosol transmission; and

WHEREAS, public health experts have indicated that persons infected with COVID-19 may not show symptoms, and transmission or "shedding" of the coronavirus that causes COVID-19 may be most virulent before a person shows any symptoms; and

WHEREAS, the CDC has recommended that people with mild symptoms consistent with COVID-19 be assumed to be infected with the disease; and

WHEREAS, upon a proclamation that a public health or civil preparedness emergency exists, section 28-9(b) of the Connecticut General Statutes authorizes the modification or suspension in whole or in part by executive order of any statute or regulation or requirement or part thereof that conflicts with the efficient and expeditious execution of civil preparedness functions or the protection of public health; and

WHEREAS, the Commissioner of Housing is authorized to implement the provisions of Chapter 138a of the Connecticut General Statutes, including but not limited to implement and administer a program of rental assistance for low- and moderate-income families living in privately-owned rental housing; and

WHEREAS, to prevent homelessness, housing insecurity, and the resulting increased risk of COVID-19 transmission, and mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is necessary to provide a temporary program for rental housing assistance and a temporary program for mortgage assistance; and

WHEREAS, in order to create and administer such rental assistance program, it is necessary to make certain immediate and temporary modifications to the rent bank program requirements set forth in Chapter 138a of the Connecticut General Statutes; and

WHEREAS, the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority (CHFA) is a body politic and corporate, constituting a public instrumentality and political subdivision pursuant to Chapter 134 of the Connecticut General Statutes (the "Act") for the purpose of alleviating the shortage of housing for low and moderate income families and persons in the State of Connecticut; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with the Act, CHFA administers and implements the Emergency Mortgage Assistance Program (EMAP), through which mortgage payment assistance is provided to eligible mortgagors; and

WHEREAS, modifications to the EMAP requirements set forth in the Act are necessary in order to implement temporary mortgage assistance needed as a result of the current COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, distancing and other protection measures enacted to limit the transmission of COVID-19 have limited the availability of continuing education classes for plumbers and electricians which, prior to the issuance of Executive Order No. 7EEE, had to be offered in person; and

WHEREAS, as a result of the limited availability of such classes, electricians and plumbers may be unable to satisfy continuing education requirements in time to renew their licenses before they would expire;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, NED LAMONT, Governor of the State of Connecticut, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the State of Connecticut, do hereby **ORDER AND DIRECT:**

1. **Authorization for Temporary Rental Housing Program.** Effective immediately and for six months from the date of this order, unless earlier modified or extended, Sections 8-347, 8-347a and 8-348 of the Connecticut General Statutes and any associated regulations are modified to authorize the Commissioner of the Connecticut Department of Housing to modify, waive or exempt certain provisions contained therein only to the extent necessary to create and administer a temporary program of rental housing assistance to benefit tenants who meet certain criteria to be established by the Commissioner, in consultation with the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management and Office of the Governor. Modifications and waivers to the rent bank program requirements, as well as fiscal information about the temporary program and assistance provided, shall be reported to the Office of Policy and Management and the Office of the Governor not later than the final Thursday of each month, beginning in August 2020, for the duration of the temporary relief program.

2. **Temporary Mortgage Relief Program.** Effective immediately and for six months from the date of this order, unless earlier modified, extended, or terminated, Sections 8-265cc through 8-265kk of the Connecticut General Statutes are modified to authorize the Chief Executive Officer of the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority (CHFA) to modify or waive requirements of those statutes, known as the Emergency Mortgage Assistance Program ("EMAP"), only to the extent necessary to create and administer a temporary program of mortgage assistance for borrowers who meet certain criteria to be established by Commissioner of the Department of Housing, in consultation with the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management and Office of the Governor, to mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and thereby prevent homelessness. Modifications and waivers to the EMAP program requirements, as well as fiscal information about the program and assistance provided, shall be reported to the CHFA board of directors and the Office of the Governor not later than the final Thursday of each month, beginning in August 2020, for the duration of the temporary relief program.

3. **Online Continuing Education for Plumbers and Electricians.** Sections 20-335 and 20-334d of the Connecticut General Statutes and Section 20-334d-1(d) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies are modified to extend until December 31, 2020 the deadline for electricians and plumbers to complete continuing education requirements and to permit electricians and plumbers to renew their licenses within existing deadlines notwithstanding any such plumber's or electrician's failure to complete continuing education

requirements prior to December 31, 2020. Licensing renewal deadlines and any other associated renewal requirements shall remain unchanged by this order. The Commissioner of Consumer Protection may issue any orders she deems necessary to implement and effectuate the purposes of this order.

Unless otherwise specified herein, this order shall take effect immediately and remain in effect for the duration of the public health and civil preparedness emergency, unless earlier modified, extended or terminated.

Dated at Hartford, Connecticut, this 13th day of July, 2020.

Ned Lamont
Governor

By His Excellency's Command

Denise W. Merrill
Secretary of the State