

A CRISIS WITHIN A CRISIS: THE EFFECT OF COVID-19 ON RENTERS IN PROVIDENCE AND RHODE ISLAND

TEAM UTRA - SUMMER 2020
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BACKGROUND

Providence and Rhode Island had an eviction crisis long before the pandemic. The eviction moratorium that expired early July means that tenants in RI are at risk of eviction. Eviction affects communities of color in Providence at higher rates.

RESULTS

- 227 responses to our survey
- 34% of respondents had difficulty paying their rent since March 1
- Median reported decrease in monthly income (pre- to post-COVID-19) was \$1502
- 90% of respondents cited job/income loss as the reason for rent arrears

"I am glad this is bringing light to housing issues, but ... all of these problems already existed; none of these housing problems that we're hearing about are new."

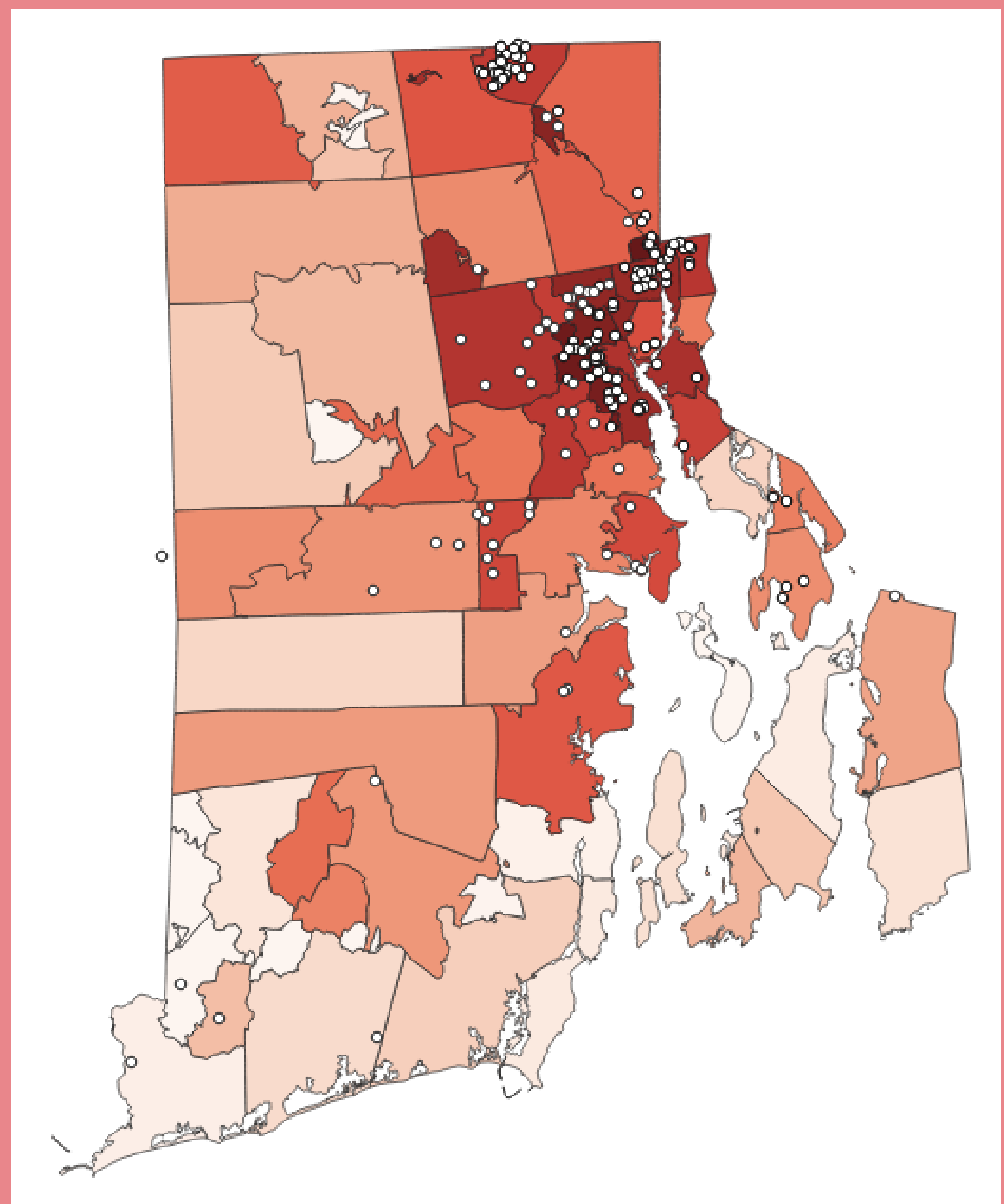
-Tenant Network RI organizer

CONCLUSIONS

Tenants in Rhode Island are struggling to pay rent due to COVID-19-related job loss. The city and state governments need to do more to prevent widespread eviction.

METHODOLOGY

- We used a mixed-methods approach
- 25-question virtual renter survey
 - Interviews with organizers and tenant lawyers
 - Address collection and GIS mapping



179 unique addresses for post-COVID-19 rental arrears evictions collected between 7/7/2020 - 8/7/2020 (white points) over RI Department of Health COVID-19 infection rate by zip code (red areas)

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