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**Supervisor Matt Heinz released the following statement on a board action to provide legal defense to Pima County residents facing eviction:**

Today the Pima County Board of Supervisors took a monumental step in leveling the playing field for folks in our community who are facing eviction. We'll spend up to \$2 million to provide eviction defense for tenants who've fallen behind on rent.

Until now, tenants have been represented by lawyers in eviction hearings less than 1 percent of the time, while landlords have had legal counsel 88 percent of the time. Our action today will help keep roofs over the heads of thousands of Pima County families.

Also, because of a separate board action today, the county will be allocating \$15.1 million for rental and utility assistance to both tenants and property owners. This is another urgently needed action that will make a direct impact on our residents' lives.

Thank you to the dozens of community members - including tenants who have been evicted, advocates working with families and children, constables and property owners - for making your voices heard at our meeting and for writing in support of this urgently needed action.

Together we can keep our community housed, healthy and safe.