



March 20, 2020

Co-Chairs Roblan and Holvey and Members of the Committee,

Community Alliance of Tenants is Oregon's oldest and most-experienced tenant-rights organization led by tenants. Since 1996, we've been empowering each other as renters to demand safe, stable, and affordable housing. We prioritize those of us from most-impacted communities, as we believe that we are most equipped to address housing health, stability and displacement concerns with adequate networks, knowledge, support, and opportunity. We define most impacted as low-income, Black and other communities of color, seniors, people with disabilities, families with children, first-time renters, and immigrants and refugees. We accomplish our mission with a comprehensive three-pronged programmatic approach we blend together the support of service-based offerings in our education department, where we coach our fellow renters in understanding their rights and responsibilities with organizing and learning together. We empower one another to draw from our experiences, resiliency, and what we've learned from the service-based part of the organization to affect positive change in our local communities. We seek to assert ourselves as essential contributors to Oregon's economy and as critical contributors in maintaining healthy and well-balanced landlord-tenant relationships.

As the coronavirus spreads exponentially the impacts will touch all of us. We are grateful for the leadership of Governor Brown and local leaders for taking immediate action through emergency declarations and preventative measures to help curb the growth of this pandemic to save lives.

As our communities are rapidly trying to adjust to this outbreak and the measures necessary to slow the spread of the virus we must address the emerging needs and impacts to our economic security and ability to care for our families now to avoid long term or permanent harm.

And while all communities in Oregon will be impacted by this global pandemic, our community is impacted in very specific ways. Renters and tenant leaders are sitting on the precipice of houselessness. Many have lost jobs due to Covid-19 and have no way to pay their rent on April 1st. While Multnomah county has passed an eviction moratorium, rents will still be due in 6 months and without income, it will mean eviction for hundreds of thousands of renters throughout the state.

As you consider the steps to take to address this crisis, please keep in mind ways to lift up each of our communities, in addition to the policy document submitted by the worker advocates today. Specifically,

- State-wide Eviction and Mortgage Forgiveness, rental assistance and legal support if land owners do not follow new emergency laws.

Thank you for your consideration. The Community Alliance of Tenants looks forward to continuing to work with you on these policy solutions to serve our communities.

For all of us,

Rachel Pfeffer, PhD
Interim Executive Director