

Dear Governor Brown and Members of the Joint Special Committee on Coronavirus Response;

My name is Ken Hick and I have been providing rental housing to Oregon residents for 30 years. I currently have 20 dwelling units located in Oregon, specifically Salem and The Dalles.

I recognize the extraordinary situation that we are now in requires sacrifice on everybody's part. I very much want to help my fellow Oregonians that have lost their jobs because of the COVID-19 pandemic. I understand that stay home / stay safe is the wisest policy to control the spread of the virus, and that we must keep people housed during this crisis.

Most rental properties are owned by individuals and small businesses that have financial obligations including mortgages, utilities, payroll, insurance, and taxes. We typically have no more than a month of operating cash available. Recognizing that one or more of our tenants may not be able to pay their rent for two to three months or longer, we are very much at risk of being unable to fulfill our own financial obligations as housing providers. I am therefore asking that you:

1. Establish a statewide emergency rental assistance program that benefits tenants by keeping them in place and landlords like myself by keeping us solvent. This needs to be in place by April 1, 2020, so that we may meet our April mortgage obligations.
2. Even if there is a rental assistance program in place, there will likely be some housing providers that will need some form of mortgage forbearance. I ask that you require state-chartered lenders to grant us a temporary moratorium on debt service payments. This should be in place at least as long as the moratorium on evictions for non-payment of rent.

Thank you for your service to our State and thank you for your consideration of these requests.

Sincerely,

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