

Hello,

My name is Jeffrey Bennett. I represent landlords throughout Oregon.

I oppose the ongoing imposition of termination and eviction moratoriums, unless the legislature is going to subsidize rents. Here's why....

YOU'RE REQUIRING LANDLORDS TO WORK FOR FREE

Landlords are required to comply with the ORLTA. That means, among other things, that landlords must provide tenants with habitable premises. In order to fulfill the landlord's legal obligations, the landlord must work on those obligations. Landlords have to work on the financial side of supplying premises to tenants (paying mortgages, taxes, utilities, fees...), work on repairs, respond to tenants' complaints, and so on.

Think about that for a moment....

Where else in Oregon is anyone being required to work *for free*? That concept sounds insane, but it's exactly what the current termination and eviction moratorium requires. Could you imagine telling a waiter, assessor, store manager, or any other Oregon worker that he/she must provide services without pay?

When you think about that, don't get caught up in any sort of "but they'll get paid later" rhetoric. That type of rhetoric intentionally obfuscates reality. None of the foregoing workers would work for nine months under a "they'll get paid later" program. Instead, many of them would collect unemployment. Still, the legislature is contemplating requiring landlords to work... for free.

MANY LANDLORDS LACK DEEP POCKETS

The moratoriums are crushing landlords. Landlords only survive off of the net profit that's left over after paying principal, interest, taxes, insurance, fees, repairs, management expenses, etc. For many mom and pop owners, elderly investors, and others, they depend upon that net income for their survival. That income is used to buy food, housing, and essential services. Without that income, the landlords would go broke.

YOU'RE DESTROYING AFFORDABLE HOUSING

I understand the political expediency associated with "affordable housing" slogans. However, you're destroying affordable housing by making it impossible for landlords to derive enough income from housing developments to maintain affordability. All studies are pointing toward a dramatic drop in the amount of new construction that will be coming online, because Oregon is making the development of new housing unattractive.

I could go on, but I sense that you already "get it." Still, I'm hopeful that legislators will wake up, smell the coffee, recognize the destructive forces they'd unleash via ongoing moratoriums, and avoid imposing moratoriums.

If you want landlords to provide housing, help them provide housing! Let me restate that: If you're going to mandate that landlords provide housing, help them provide housing. Subsidize rents, and stop making landlords work for free. You'll benefit the tenants you purport to help, without destroying landlords in the process.

Respectfully, Jeffrey S. Bennett