

To our Oregon legislators:

Housing Development Center (HDC) is a nonprofit affordable housing development consulting group based in Portland. For 27 years we have worked with affordable housing providers across Oregon to strengthen opportunities for low-income families and individuals by developing, preserving, and sustaining affordable homes.

At HDC, we believe that housing stability must be a paramount public priority during the COVID-19 pandemic. Every family and individual in Oregon needs a place to shelter and stay safe. When people don't have access to stable housing, they face increased health risks—and exacerbate health risks to the whole community.

Our partners are nonprofit housing owners and housing authorities that serve diverse communities in urban, suburban, and rural areas across the state. ***Our partners are telling us that their clientele—including working families, veterans, and culturally specific communities—are facing increased housing instability and risk of homelessness as a result of the pandemic.*** Job loss, school closures, and deterioration of social networks and supports are exacerbating existing challenges, from financial instability to crowding at home. Families are having a harder time covering basic living costs, including rent. Many families are desperately close to homelessness.

Oregon needs a strong eviction moratorium to prevent the COVID-19 crisis from becoming a homelessness crisis. We urge the legislature to enact a strong eviction moratorium and repayment period that will prevent vulnerably Oregonians from losing their homes in the midst of this devastating epidemic. If we fail to act now, we are sure to see grave effects that will disproportionately impact Oregon's communities of color.

Every Oregonian deserves a safe, stable, affordable place to call home. Moreover, now more than ever, every Oregonian deserves to live in a community free of the rippling health and safety impacts of widespread housing instability.

Thank you for your urgent and strong action to ensure housing stability for all Oregonians in this time of crisis.

Sincerely,

Joni Hartmann