



Re: Support for LC 18, extending eviction moratorium and the rental assistance program

Co-Chairs President Courtney & Speaker Tina Kotek, Co-Vice Chairs Sen. Girod and Rep. Drazan, and members of the committee,

For the record, my name is Nancy Haque and I am writing on behalf of Basic Rights Oregon. We advocate for the LGBTQ community throughout Oregon.

Thank you for taking up this bill, which would extend the eviction moratorium and the rental assistance program.

We strongly support this bill as it is essential for the health and well-being of the LGBTQ community. Passing this bill is vital to avoid a wave of displacement and homelessness in our state that would have a devastating impact on families and individuals, particularly on our Black and Brown LGBTQ community members who are at the greatest risk of lifelong harm from COVID evictions. Discriminatory housing policies have made homeownership difficult and inaccessible, leaving people of color at greater risk of rental evictions even as higher rates of COVID exposure are leaving people ill and economically stressed. For example, according to the U.S. Census Pulse Survey, 30% of Black renters are at risk of eviction because of concerns they can't pay next month's rent.

Additionally, our transgender community members are at heightened risk of homelessness, as the National Center for Transgender Equality reports that 1 in 5 trans people have experienced homelessness at some point in their life.¹ And that figure is from before the pandemic. By extending the eviction moratorium, we can ensure that our transgender loved ones and neighbors are safe during the pandemic.

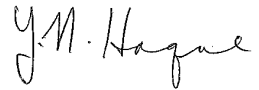
Until there are vaccines for everyone, the best prevention during the pandemic is a safe place to stay, which is why eviction moratoriums were put in place. In states that lifted the eviction moratoriums, incidences of COVID-19 have risen at 2.1 times the rate of states that maintained them. Deaths increased by 5.4 times.

These are alarming numbers to say the least, and we need to remember that people's lives are on the line.

¹ National Center for Transgender Equality, <https://transequality.org/issues/housing-homelessness>

We urge you to extend the eviction moratorium in order to protect our neighbors and community members.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nancy Haque". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "N" and a distinct "H".

Nancy Haque
Executive Director, Basic Rights Oregon