



# PARTNERSHIP FOR SAFETY & JUSTICE

**Submitted to Joint Interim Committee on the Third Special Session of 2020  
Thursday, December 17, 2020**

## **Testimony in Support of LC 18**

**By Amy Davidson, Crime Survivor Program Director, Partnership for Safety and Justice**

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

My name is Amy Davidson, and I'm the Crime Survivor Program Director at Partnership for Safety and Justice (PSJ). PSJ is a statewide, non-profit organization that advocates for public safety and criminal justice policies. For over 20 years, our work has advanced state and local solutions that ensure accountability, equity, and healing on behalf of people convicted of crime, crime survivors, and the families and communities of both.

I'm here today to urge your support of LC 18. This bill is essential for the health and well being of the people we all serve. Extending the moratorium on evictions and the rental assistance program is paramount to avoiding a wave of displacement and homelessness in our state. Ending these programs now will deliver instability that will likely result in higher rates of victimization and criminal behavior that's rooted in a lack of access to basic needs.

Prior to COVID, the state already grappled with its lack of affordable or stable housing. This lack of stability has a dramatic impact on survivors of crime and people with convictions, particularly to folks in communities of color. Survivors of color are most harmed and least helped. Black and brown Oregonians experience over-policing and over-incarceration. We also know that Black and brown Oregonians are at the greatest risk of contracting COVID *and* of lifelong harm resulting from COVID evictions. This constellation of factors places us at the intersection of public health and public safety. Ending a stream of support that we know is working makes for a bleak public safety outlook that is entirely avoidable.

Two years ago, I experienced a wrongful no-cause eviction as a renter. I can't imagine the fear and desperation I felt then happening now against the backdrop of a pandemic. And that was before COVID. Today, I'm privileged to speak to you as an advocate and also as a landlord. So I'm asking leadership to make good on its promise that the 40% of Oregon households that rent would not lose their homes.

It might feel like we're at a deficit on every level right now, but we're actually teeming with critical lifesaving information that we didn't fully see nine months ago. Secure housing is a matter of basic public health and public safety. On behalf of PSJ, I urge your support for **LC 18.**

